

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

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THE BRITISH EMPIRE

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‘The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty’

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PREFATORY NOTE

I SHOULD like to express my indebtedness to McGill University for affording me the opportunity of delivering lectures on which this little book is partly based. To Professor Coupland I am grateful for valuable suggestions and to my wife, as ever, for her unerring taste in wielding the pruning knife.

B. W.

November, 1927.

P.S.—Even within the five months since these pages were written the appointment of commissions to revise the constitutions of India, Ceylon and East Africa presage further stages in the development of the Empire. Any possible changes that may thereby ensue can only illustrate that vital power of development which I have tried to indicate as characteristic of the British Empire, and can only be understood as a result of its previous history. Thanks to this vitality no complete description of the Empire will be possible till it is extinct.

April, 1928.

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CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN COLONIZATION— THE ADVENTURERS

RICHARD HAKLUYT in *A Discourse of Western Planting*, written "at the request and direction of the righte worshipfull Mr. Walter Raghly, nowe Knight," offers sundry reason why the Queen should encourage plantations in America. First "the frye of wandringe beggars of England, that growe upp ydly, and hurtefull and burdenous to this realme, may there be unladen . . . and may people waste countries . . . to their owne more happy state"; while the more adventurous "men of excellent wittes and of divers singuler giftes, overthrowen by suertishippe, by sea, or by some folly of youthe, that are not able to live in England, may there be raised againe, and doe their countrie goodd service." This enterprise may also "staye the Spanishe Kinge from flowinge over all the face of that waste firme of America, yf wee seate and plante there in time;" procure "an ample vente" for our

industries, especially wool and linen, that were being shut out from most of our old markets, and bring back in return such commodities as "plentie of excellent trees for mastes, of goodly timber to builde shippes and to make greate navies, of pitche, tarr, hempe, and all thinges incident for a navie royall, and that for no price, and without money or request"; it will also "breed more skillfull, connynge, and stowte pilott and maryners than other belonginge to this lande . . . and this realme shall have by that meane shippes of greate burden and of greate strength for the defence of this realme." Lastly "wee shall by plantynge there inlarge the glory of the gospell and from England plante sincere religion, and provide a safe and a sure place to receave people from all partes of the worlde that are forced to flee for the truthe of Gods worde."

These arguments of Hakluyt for English colonization are an epitome of the reasons which, singly or severally, have been the motives for the external expansion of nations—as an outlet for waste energy or population, the development of trade, shipping and national prestige, or the spread of religion. Such were some of the causes for the hiving off of Greek states and for the invasion of these islands by Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Danes and Normans. From the break-up of the Roman empire right up to the fifteenth century most of the peoples of Europe

were too busy sorting themselves out afresh and introducing some order into the lands where they had settled to go far afield ; and they had little consciousness of a world outside the Mediterranean, the North Sea and the eastern shores of the Atlantic. True, there is a legend that Madoc, one of our Welsh princes, adventured to the shores of America in the twelfth century, while the Vikings of Norway and Iceland undoubtedly made several voyages and even settlements there during the four centuries before America became generally known to Europe. But such isolated endeavours remained obscure and left the common stock of European knowledge untouched.

The English people, destined to profit most from overseas adventure, were not the first to embark on the wave of maritime enterprise which began in the fifteenth century. The need for such enterprise was first called forth when the Turks, after the capture of Constantinople in 1453, and by their occupation of Egypt and Syria, closed the eastern Mediterranean to foreign trade and also barred access to the wealth of the East by the overland route. The means of directing such enterprise was at the same time supplied by the spread of the new learning and the development of speculative curiosity and invention by the Renaissance movement. The use of the compass was discovered, enabling mariners to cease following familiar landmarks along well-known shores and to steer

their way across the open sea. A new conception of the world's configuration and a revived interest in the forgotten science of geography appeared. Thus the work of exploration was not left to the untutored enthusiasm of rash adventurers but fostered by the research and discoveries of far-seeing and laborious men of science.

The father of modern exploration was the Portuguese prince, Henry the Navigator, who himself hardly ever set foot on shipboard, but on his lonely headland, Cape Sagres, looking out on the Atlantic, gathered information from seamen of every land, collected maps, had charts of uncharted seas made for him, and trained and sent forth a school of pilots to creep round Africa on a new way to the East. The Navigator did not live to see the reward of his labours; but sixteen years after his death one of his school, Bartholomew Diaz, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and was followed in 1497 by Vasco da Gama, who at length reached India, the goal of Portuguese endeavour. Five years before, the Genoese Christopher Columbus, trained by his Portuguese father-in-law in Henry's great school and inured to the ways of the open sea by sailing in Bristol ships to Iceland, had in the service of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain made the yet more momentous discovery of lands in the western Atlantic. These lands were not, indeed, the outskirts of India and China, as Columbus

hoped and believed, in his conviction, mad as it seemed to most of his generation, that the world was round, but the approaches to the unknown continent of America.

Within thirty years of the discovery of the routes to India and the West Indies, the Portuguese and Spaniards had laid the foundations of their Indian and American Empires. Albuquerque, the gallant Portuguese statesman and soldier, during his memorable rule in India from 1509 to 1516, founded settlements on the shores of Africa, in the Persian Gulf and in the Indian Archipelago as well as on the coast of India itself, and established trade with Bengal, Burma, Sumatra, the Spice Islands, Siam and even far-off China and Japan. By the year 1522 the Spaniard Fernando Cortez had finally crushed the Aztec power and brought Mexico under the dominion of Spain: eight years later Pizarro had conquered Peru, and Almagro had been sent to subdue Chile. Nor were these expeditions mere trading or buccaneering ventures. Settlers from the mother-countries soon began to trickle out to the conquered territories, and with them went missionaries to sustain the faith of the new-comers, to spread the gospel among the heathen aborigines, and, incidentally, to plant the Inquisition. Wherever Portuguese traders penetrated in the East they were accompanied by Franciscan and Jesuit Fathers, while in the Spanish West the Dominicans, under the leader-

ship of the noble "Apostle of the Indies," Las Casas, not only preached Christianity but stood up bravely against the cruelties practised by the new settlers on the Mexican peons they had enslaved. Thus barely a quarter of a century after the voyages of Columbus and da Gama it seemed as if the peoples of the Iberian peninsula alone were to have the monopoly of the vast new lands opened out to the east and west of Europe, a monopoly already confirmed by the grave sanction of religion, since the Holy Father, Alexander VI, by his Bull of 1493, had granted all newly discovered lands east of the 370th meridian to Portugal and all to the west to Spain.

Undaunted, however, by this papal Bull, both England and France were not slow to follow in the field of overseas adventure. A mere accident, the delay of a messenger, had prevented Henry VII from being the patron of Columbus in his first voyage, and the great explorer owed much of his seacraft to his Bristol training. Two years before the discovery of America, Bristol had equipped an expedition to find the mythical island of Brazil in the western seas; only five years after it Henry VII, who, for all his parsimony, never thought money ill spent on ships, sent out Sebastian Cabot, like Columbus a Genoese, to explore the western mainland. Cabot's success in 1497 in sighting Cape Breton and Newfoundland was followed by other ex-

peditions from Bristol and London to the Straits of Belleisle, the coast of Labrador and as far south as Chesapeake Bay. Francis I of France, in emulation of England, sent Verrazzano in 1524 to explore the coast of Florida; and between 1534 and 1541 Cartier and Roberval penetrated the St. Lawrence as far as the modern Quebec and Montreal. The Spaniards at first were not much troubled by these expeditions, for they did not interfere with the richer lands to the south which they had already secured; and soon both France and England were too much occupied with internal struggles and religious difficulties to pursue exploring or colonizing activities. Almost the only permanent result of Cabot's and the other early Tudor ventures was the opening up of the valuable Newfoundland fisheries, primarily by the English, though they were soon followed thither by Breton, Portuguese and Spanish fishermen. At first the English barely held their own, for in 1528 one of their ships came back with the tale that they had run "into a sea as hot as water in a boiler; for fear lest that water should melt the pitch of their vessel they turned about and came to explore Newfoundland, where they found some 50 Spanish, French and Portuguese fishing vessels." But fifteen years later the English appear to have fully established a flourishing trade on this coast, a Spanish report stating that since Cabot's discovery "the Eng-

lish have frequented it on account of the fish which are caught in quantities by the natives. . . . The English bring thence rare and valuable furs, and transport thither merchandise that pleases the natives."

With the reign of Elizabeth begins a renewed outburst of maritime adventure in England, never checked even to this day. From 1530 to the end of Mary's reign the religious upheaval had diverted men's minds from other interests, and the alliance with Spain, cemented by Mary's marriage with Philip II, was an obstacle to our entrance into that nation's close preserves in central and southern America, the most promising field of maritime adventure. Elizabeth's religious settlement once more united the English people, and by the opposition it aroused in foreign powers stimulated a personal loyalty to the Virgin Queen that found expression in deeds of courage and daring, whether by her hard-bitten sea dogs from Devon or her ruffling court gallants; and the suppression of the monasteries had poured wealth into the hands of comparatively few individuals, eager to find lucrative employment for their newly gained capital in maritime adventure. Elizabeth and her ministers, though cautious in their public utterances, smiled privately on adventurers who increased their own and the country's wealth and reputation; and the whole nation rejoiced in consciousness of the new-found power that the poets and

dramatists, above all Shakespeare, taught them to discover in

This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
Feared by their breed and famous by their birth,

England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
Of watery Neptune.

Opportunity was not wanting for adventure. It is true that the most tempting morsels of the newly discovered world seemed already monopolized by Spain. For besides her actual possessions in the West she claimed the right of denying to others any part even in the unoccupied regions of North America ; since 1580, too, when Philip annexed Portugal, she had control of Brazil and entered into enjoyment of the trade and trading stations of the East, on both sides of India, in the Persian Gulf, on the coasts of Africa and even in Cambodia, Java and Borneo. But this swollen power of Spain carried within it the seeds of its own decay ; the mere extent of her empire made it more vulnerable, while the revolt of the Netherlands and her attempt to order the affairs of France proved a drain on her resources that even the wealth of both Indies could not make good. Between them the English and their allies the revolting Dutch had plenty of scope for their teasing and exhausting guerilla warfare against Spanish

trade and possessions. This warfare was pursued with increasing fervour the more it was stimulated by patriotic endeavour to injure the Queen's most dangerous enemy and religious zeal against the hated Inquisition and all its horrors. Plunder was a further attraction; also the hope of capturing a share of newly discovered lands and increasing the national wealth and influence.

The soul of the Elizabethan age was this spirit of gallant and dare-devil adventure: but the Hawkins's, the Drakes, the Frobishers and the Raleighs of the reign were not mere soldiers of fortune ready for any dangerous or exciting exploit, without science or carefully laid design to direct their courage. Just as the real begetters of Spanish and Portuguese exploration were such as Henry the Navigator and Columbus himself, men who by their accumulation of knowledge and investigating spirit laid sure foundations for the work of mariners and conquistadors inspired by their teaching: so too the English adventurers depended largely for their success on the labours and forethought of the thinkers and scholars who preceded them.

Much of this quiet preparatory work had been begun earlier in the century. In Henry VIII's reign Thomas More had directed men's minds to thoughts of colonization in his *Utopia*, where he imagined an ideal community living in an island of the Atlantic, happy and undisturbed

by the troubles of old societies in Europe. In a more practical sphere English naval architects, taking a leaf out of King Alfred's book, had, since 1545, been gradually evolving a new design for ships specially adapted to Oceanic voyages. By the use of such designs the English navy, though small in numbers, had by the time of the Armada become the most formidable in the world, while the light sea-going English merchantmen could easily outdistance and outmanœuvre the clumsy galleons of Spain, still designed on the lines adapted to the old Mediterranean coasting trade. The theoretical study of geography and navigation was also on the increase; and Englishmen were becoming expert chart-makers, and quick to appreciate such a map as Salvation Yeo produces in Kingsley's *Westward Ho*. Thus the Muscovy Company, incorporated in 1555, kept at its office a man "learned in cosmographie," paying him the high salary of £200 a year to prepare plans and charts for the captains of their fleets; Michael Lock, a merchant of the same company, made a private collection of all the maps and charts he could acquire and so was able to advise and lend charts to Martin Frobisher to help him in his search for the North-West passage. Better known among the scientific pioneers of our empire are Raleigh, who was something more than a great courtier and a gallant adventurer, bringing, as he did, some of the historian's

exactness to his insatiable curiosity about fields for settlement in America ; and his teacher at Oxford, Hakluyt.

Above all Richard Hakluyt deserves to be remembered for his part in directing our early efforts in exploration and colonization. Born in the reign of Edward VI, from his early days at Oxford he turned to the study and later to the teaching of geography and navigation, his theoretical knowledge being sharpened by the "constant intelligence" he kept up "with the most noted seamen at Wapping near London." When at Paris in the ambassador's household, he ransacked the royal library for MS. accounts of French discoveries in Canada ; and gradually formed a large circle of friends and agents in most countries, from whom he obtained "relations," notes, maps and charts on which he based his *Divers Voyages* and his *Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, the latter published in 1589 to correct the impression he found abroad of "the sluggish security and continued neglect of the like attempts" by Englishmen and to "recommend to the world the industrious labours and painful travels of our countrymen." Like Henry the Navigator he became in time the adviser, organizer and inspirer of his country's enterprises across the seas. Hakluyt we find, for example, with John Dee, the noted astrologer and man of science, and Mercator the great

map-maker, advising the Muscovy company about their expedition under Arthur Pet to discover the North-East passage; and Hakluyt took a large part in organizing the East India Company at the end of Elizabeth's reign. Raleigh and his half-brother Sir Humphrey Gilbert also consulted him before the latter's disastrous attempt to colonize Newfoundland. Indeed, Hakluyt was the first to turn the thoughts of men like Raleigh to the need for colonization, as distinct from mere buccaneering expeditions. In Elizabethan times England, with a population of no more than 5,000,000, was generally considered to be overpopulated,—“pestered with inhabitants” as Gilbert wrote,—which may have been the case in the absence of large industries and with wasteful agricultural methods; and Hakluyt found much support for his plea that “if we would behold with the eye of pity how all our prisons are pestered and filled with able men to serve their country, which for small robberies are daily hanged up in great numbers, even twenty at a clap out of one jail (as was seen at the last assizes at Rochester), we would hasten and further, every man to his power, the deducting of some colonies of our superfluous people into these temperate and fertile parts of America, which, being within six weeks of sailing of England, are yet unpossessed of any Christians and seem to offer themselves unto us, stretching nearer unto Her

Majesty's dominions than to any other part of Europe." How soundly he laid the foundations of English colonization may briefly be seen in Bacon's later essay on *Plantations*, with its wise injunctions about the need of serious workers and the dangers of expecting to extract easy wealth from gold-mines and its other suggestions taken from Hakluyt's less compendious teaching ; suggestions which have borne fruit throughout the course of English colonial adventure.

Elizabethan England was, however, hardly ready for colonizing schemes. The adventurous souls of that age had too much to stir their imagination in other directions ; the safeguarding of their religion, the beginnings of a great commercial expansion, discoveries still to be made in unknown seas and lands, the protection of Queen and country from the unsleeping enemy Spain, besides the calls for help from the United Provinces and the Huguenots in the fight for freedom to worship God in their own way. But though the wave of colonization had not yet begun, these very distracting cares were preparing Englishmen's minds for this new enterprise in the succeeding reigns.

The ardent desire to discover new routes to countries deemed fabulously wealthy, aroused by Cabot in the reign of the first Tudor, had never entirely died out in England. Asia by a short voyage was the great goal of all sixteenth-century discovery : the Portuguese had found

one way round Africa ; the Spaniards, groping for another route westwards, had stumbled on lands even richer than Asia. Two other ways to the East seemed possible, and might well prove the shortest of all ; one round the North Cape, spoken of as the North-east passage, the other by the great inland channels north of Labrador, known as the North-west passage. Already in 1553 three ships under Sir Hugh Willoughby and Robert Chancellor had set out to discover a North-east passage on behalf of the "Mysterie and Companie of the Merchant Adventurers for the Discoverie of Regions, Dominions, Islands and Places unknown," provided with letters addressed in various tongues by Edward VI to all kings they might encounter on their voyage. Chancellor and his crew alone survived to enter the White Sea, but instead of penetrating to Asia turned aside to Moscow and there inaugurated the profitable trade in naval stores with Russia, thereafter carried on by the Muscovy Company. Only one more attempt at the North-east passage was made this century. The expedition was planned by Hakluyt, Dee and Mercator and conducted by Arthur Pet, who took the *George* of 40 tons with a crew of nine men and a boy, and the *William* of 20 tons with a crew of six : Arthur Pet alone returned.

Martin Frobisher, a Yorkshireman, was the first to attempt the North-west passage, having convinced himself by a study of previous voyages,

and of maps and charts lent him by a merchant friend, that the voyage was practicable. It was not merely a love of adventure that took him; but a serious purpose which, as with nearly all these Elizabethan sailors, including even the slave-trader Hawkins and the gallant pirate Drake, made him regard his voyages as having a religious and almost holy purpose. Thus in his sailing orders he enjoins his men "*imprimis* to banish swearing, dice and cardplaying and filthy communication, and to serve God twice a day, with the ordinary service usual in Churches of England, and to clear the glass, according to the old order of England." In June 1576 he sailed from the Thames with the *Gabriel* of 28 tons, the *Michael* of 20 and a pinnace, the Queen waving him godspeed as he passed her palace of Greenwich. His ship alone reached Labrador, whence he brought back some lumps of rock thought to contain gold. A company of Cathay, to which the Queen subscribed, was formed to extract the gold, and Frobisher's energies were wasted in two more expeditions to bring back supplies of the rock, which eventually proved valueless. Not for another ten years was the North-west passage again attempted, this time by Davis, who in his voyages of 1585-6-7 discovered Davis Strait, the entrance to Baffin Bay.

These voyages were quite in keeping with the views of the Queen's chief ministers Burghley

and Walsingham, who devoted much care to the development of commercial enterprise, especially with the object of securing greater supplies of naval stores for the fleet. Burghley divided maritime enterprise under three heads, trading, fishing and piracy, "whereof," he said, "the third is detestable." But his Mistress, though officially endorsing this sentiment, had no objection to piracy, as long as she did not appear in it. It was the most lucrative form of adventure then available, it was practised at the expense of our most formidable antagonist, and it saved the trouble of searching for new lands which Spain had not troubled to occupy. Moreover, since these expeditions were at first not officially countenanced, they seemed a good way of weakening a power with which England was nominally at peace without the danger involved in a formal declaration of war.

As in the case of the Portuguese, the earliest of these buccaneering expeditions were slave-trading ventures. Spain could not object to the English mariners taking slaves from the African coast; but the only market then available was in the Spanish colonies, where foreign traders were prohibited. The most notable of these slave-traders was the Devon man John Hawkins, whose three expeditions were in 1562, 1564, and 1567. In the first he took his slaves from Sierra Leone and found the Spanish settlers only too glad to buy them. This venture proved so lucra-

tive that, in spite of Philip's complaints, capital was invested in Hawkins's next voyage by the great courtiers Pembroke and Leicester. He sailed in the *Jesus* of Lubeck with three other small vessels, his sailing orders to the crews including the direction that they should "serve God daily, love one another, preserve your victuals, beware of fire and keep good companie." After forcing the Spanish governors to allow the sale of his slaves, he made the first passage in an English ship up the coast of America from Florida to Newfoundland and so home by the Gulf stream. His third voyage was at least winked at by the Queen, who had now begun to assist the Netherlands in their revolt against Philip, and welcomed any venture likely to weaken the source of Spanish supplies. But though Hawkins, as usual, sold his negroes at a profit to the Spanish settlers, and had received a safe-conduct from the Spanish Governor, he was set upon in the port of San Juan di Ulloa, from which he and his nephew Francis Drake barely escaped with two of their ships.

So far the kind of piracy adopted against the Spaniards had taken the comparatively mild form of smuggling. With Drake's great expedition round the world in the *Pelican* or *Golden Hind*, as it was re-christened, begins the era of downright buccaneering. Between the years 1577 and 1580, Drake in the course of his adventurous voyage had all the Spanish trade prac-

tically at his mercy, especially after he had passed the dangerous Straits of Magellan, deemed by the Spaniards sufficient protection for their Pacific provinces. Here he was able to do whatever he pleased ; in fact, at one port in Peru he seized off the bench three judges engaged in trying a negro, and kept them as hostages for the supplies he requisitioned from the town. Six years after Drake's return, Cavendish, a young Suffolk man of good family, who had squandered his fortune at Court, thought to make good his losses by repeating Drake's exploit. Equally successful in his three years' voyage, he returned to England laden with the spoil of the great trading galleon from the Philippines which he had waylaid on the Californian coast. Far more valuable than the immense treasure brought back by Drake and his imitators was the confidence in English seamanship created by these voyages in their countrymen, and the wholesome terror aroused in the Spaniard, who admitted that the " sea was full of English ships," and that " Englishmen in the West Indies come and beard us in the haven's mouth, and . . . are become lords and masters of the sea and need care for no man."

Already men's minds were turning to something more permanent than smuggling or buccaneering expeditions, profitable as these were to the organizers and vexatious to the national enemy. Hakluyt's efforts, as we have seen, to

arouse a colonizing spirit in his countrymen did not bear immediate fruit. Still he found two disciples, among the best of Elizabeth's Court, Raleigh and Gilbert, who made valiant though unsuccessful efforts to put his teaching into practice. Gilbert was an enthusiast who upbraided "the foolish sloth of many of our nation choosing . . . very miserably to live and die within this realm pestered with inhabitants, than to adventure as becometh men, to obtain an habitation in those remote lands, in which nature very prodigally doth minister unto men's endeavours." Gilbert put his theories into practice by obtaining a royal charter for colonizing any "remote or heathen lands not in the actual possession of any Christian prince;" and with the help, among others, of his half-brother Raleigh, who at his own expense equipped one of the ships for the expedition, collected a little fleet of five ships with a company of 260 men all told, including masons, artificers, smiths, miners and metal-refiners, and store of "toys, as Morris-dancers, hobby-horse and May-like conceits to delight the savage people, whom we intended to win by all fair means possible." In 1583 Gilbert himself took command of this first colonizing expedition sent out from England. The expedition was a failure. Gilbert solemnly took possession of Newfoundland on behalf of the Queen: but his men were ill-chosen, and totally unfitted for settling in an undeveloped

country. One ship, manned chiefly by piratical scoundrels, had to be turned back; the rest after some ineffectual wanderings sailed homewards at the end of August. But, though it had no practical result, this first colonizing expedition is memorable, if only for the character of its leader, one of the best types of our race. Instead of sailing home on the *Golden Hind*, the largest and best-found ship, Gilbert chose to return on the *Squirrel*, a tiny frigate of 10 tons burthen, saying, "I will not forsake my little company going homeward, with whom I have passed so many storms and perils;" partly, too, says his biographer, "he was urged to be so over-hard by hard reports given of him that he was afraid of the sea, albeit this was rather rashness than advised resolution, to prefer the wind of a vain report to the weight of his own life." A great storm sprang up, and those on her sister-ship saw the *Squirrel* nearly cast away and then, on her recovery, "giving forth signs of joy, the General sitting abaft with a book in his hand, crying out to us in the *Hind* (so oft as we did approach within hearing), 'We are as near to heaven by sea as by land,' reiterating the same speech, well beseeming a soldier resolute in Jesus Christ, as I can testify he was." That same night the lights of the frigate suddenly disappeared and the *Squirrel* was seen no more.

Undeterred by this failure, in the following year Raleigh sent out a party to colonize a more

southern part of the continent, Virginia, so named after the Virgin Queen, and again, on their return, another party of 180 persons who in 1585 actually settled there. But conditions proved too hard for them ; and next year Drake found them starving and brought back to England the first English colonizing party that had actually tried to make a home in America.

But though the time was not yet ripe for colonization, Elizabeth's reign saw the beginning of an equally permanent and characteristic form of English adventure, and the foundation, all unconsciously, of one of our greatest dominions beyond the seas. The aim, as we have seen, of almost all sixteenth-century exploration was to find a means of tapping the riches of Asia. The Portuguese and Spaniards controlled the sea-route to India and practically monopolized its trade ; but the English, and soon the Dutch also, were determined by hook or by crook to have a share in these riches. Already in 1583 Fitch and Newberrie and two other English merchants had ventured on the long and hazardous overland journey to Delhi, where the Great Mogul, Akbar, held his court ; and so encouraging was the account Fitch gave on his return to England that others were induced to follow his example. Several London merchants combined to send out an expedition round the Cape under Lancaster in 1591 and another five years

later ; the Dutch also sent out fifteen expeditions in the last years of the century.

All reports showed that the Hispano-Portuguese monopoly was vulnerable, but that for successful trading individual enterprise alone was too risky. Single ships were liable to attack by pirates, the single trader was at the mercy of a foreign ruler's whims and had no protection against the greed and fanaticism of his subjects. It was not then considered the business of the royal navy, had it even been large enough, to protect private trade ; nor was it customary for the Queen to send out consuls or even ambassadors to distant countries merely to look after the interests of merchants. Hence traders were driven to band together for mutual protection. They pooled their resources and sent out imposing squadrons of merchantmen, heavily armed, as a defence against pirates and attacks by natives ; established factories under paid agents for the common use ; and if, as in Russia, the Levant and India, they thought it advisable to have a royal ambassador to speak for them at the ruler's Court, they were required by the Queen to pay his salary. Accordingly the merchants wishing to trade in Russia, Turkey or India formed themselves into companies either for single voyages or on a permanent basis, each contributing his share of capital for purposes of trade and for these incidental expenses ; while for additional protection

they secured a charter of monopoly in their particular trade from the Crown. It was the golden age of chartered companies.

On this principle in September 1599 a hundred merchants interested in Eastern trade met in London and agreed to subscribe £30,000 for the joint capital of a company to be administered by a governor and a committee of twenty-four : on the 31st December 1600 the newly formed company was granted a royal charter giving it the sole right of trading to the East and authority to make peace or war with any non-Christian power "for the honour of our nation and wealth of our people." So began the East India Company, the parent of our Indian empire. But when the Company was formed the promoters had no idea of creating an empire or even of making permanent settlements in India. Sir Thomas Roe, the first of our eastern diplomats and a wise counsellor of the Company, wrote twelve years after its foundation that, "if the Great Mogul would offer me ten forts, I would not accept of one. . . . The charge is greater than the trade will bear, for to maintain a garrison will eat out the profit. . . . The Portuguese, notwithstanding their many rich residences, are beggared by keeping of soldiers. . . . It has also been the error of the Dutch, who seek plantations here by the sword; they turn a wonderful stock, they prole in all places, they possess some of the best, yet their dead pays

consume all gain. Let this be received as a rule, that if you will profit, seek it at sea, and in quiet trade; for without controversy, it is an error to affect garrisons and land wars in India. . . . It is not a number of ports, residences and factories that will profit you; they will increase charge, but not recompense it:" and he concludes by solemnly warning them not to allow private trade—"for your business will be better done." This advice was at first scrupulously observed. For fifty years the Company made no attempt to obtain territory in India; they were content with the Great Mogul's licence to trade in a few ports, the first of these being Surat on the west coast, and to set up factories for storing merchandise with factors to control them. The Company's chief rivals in India were the Portuguese and the Dutch. The former, in the eyes of Europeans and Indians alike, had all the prestige that came to them as first discoverers, and owned besides strong forts in all the strategic positions in the eastern seas. But two English victories in 1612 over superior Portuguese squadrons, won within sight of native onlookers on land, did much to destroy this prestige. Gradually the English company ousted them as rivals on the west of India and the Persian Gulf, while the Dutch company, richer and at first more enterprising than ours, entirely destroyed Spanish and Portuguese trade in the Spice Islands and further east.

By the end of the sixteenth century, though no beginning had been made of the British Empire as we know it, the impulse towards it was in full swing. Late in starting compared with other nations, the English had made up for this handicap by their spirited apprenticeship in naval adventure. In piracy and brigandage much of this apprenticeship no doubt consisted, nor can we be proud of all the methods of warfare used by Hawkins or even Drake. But it is only fair to judge men by the standards and conditions of their age. To Drake and his fellows the crying enormity of the age was the unfair monopoly given by an ignorant priest to a power that seemed to them the incarnation of cruelty, superstition and oppression, a standing obstacle to a free life of adventure and national development by others. It never occurred to them that piracy, almost the only method left for Englishmen who wished to sail in newly discovered seas, was not perfectly legitimate warfare against such a foe; while their genuine conviction that they were engaged on a holy adventure, even when that adventure included slave-snatching, is evident from their sailing orders and from the lives and words of men like Frobisher and Gilbert. Nor is this spirit of high adventure confined to the master-mariners or the great courtiers. You find the same in a humble merchant like Fitch or a common sailor like Andrew Battell of Leigh in

Essex, who wrote his simple account of his terrible captivity by the Portuguese in Angola to enlighten his countrymen. Lastly we may note one peculiarity of these first adventures of the English. They were no doubt often favoured, either overtly or more often surreptitiously, by the Queen and her ministers, but were in all cases the result of individual initiative and depended entirely for their success on the self-reliance and courage of the projectors. Thus Englishmen, depending far less than most foreign adventurers on Government support, acquired by constant risks and frequent failures that sense of personal responsibility essential for those who aim to play a great part in the government of the world.

CHAPTER II

COLONIZATION UNDER THE STUARTS

THE era of the Stuarts is not popular with Englishmen in our domestic history. But in imperial history it is memorable for the inauguration of our colonial expansion. Nor was the part of the Stuart monarchs in this expansion insignificant. Until Victoria's reign none of our kings took so lively an interest in their new possessions overseas as the Stuarts. They rated highly the value of the plantations to England : and, though all their measures in dealing with them were not wise, much is due to their determination not to allow the new offshoots of British stock to be cut entirely adrift, while the English nation was still groping for sound methods of colonial policy and before the colonies were strong enough to stand by themselves.

We have seen that in Elizabeth's day men's minds were gradually turning towards colonization, although no successful colonies had yet been established. With the accession of James I these plans took more definite shape. The distress in the rural districts already noted during the Tudor period in such pamphlets as *A Briefe*

Conceipte touching the Common Weale of this Realme of England, where complaint is made of the "desolation of countries by enclosures : desolation of townes for lack of occupation and craftes," and the fear expressed that England, with its total population no larger than that of London to-day, would soon be unable to support this population ;—all these troubles were only accentuated at the beginning of the Stuart period. In 1621 we find 400 poor people of Wiltshire complaining to the justices that they could find no work to do, and similar complaints in the neighbouring agricultural county of Gloucestershire. The remedy advocated by Hakluyt, Raleigh and Gilbert for the relief of distress by sending part of this surplus population overseas thus came more than ever into favour. Bacon, with his shrewd eye to the needs of the time, wrote one of his most pregnant essays on Plantations. The peace with Spain, one of James's first measures, also turned the attention of those with capital to invest towards colonization. In Elizabeth's time rich courtiers and merchants had sunk much money in shipping, which depended largely for its returns on illicit trade and piracy in the possessions of the national enemy. With the effective prohibition of such buccaneering ventures at the peace this source of revenue came to an end ; but a new means of employing both ships and capital was discovered in developing plantations overseas for trade

with the mother country. James and his ministers approved of such enterprises, believing that, instead of depending on foreign products, it would profit the country to import naval and other stores from plantations settled and controlled by Englishmen, who would also provide new markets for English manufactures. As the reign advanced many began seriously to consider emigration in their own interests. Growing religious and political differences with James's methods led others besides those who could not find a livelihood in England to embrace the opportunity of seeking their fortune elsewhere,—men of independent mind anxious to find a land where they could make unfettered choice of their own politics and religion. John White of Dorchester, for example, writes in 1628 that he hopes “to find refuge in another land for God's oppressed people, where a bulwark might be raised against the kingdom of anti-Christ, which the Jesuits labour to rear up in all quarters of the world.” It is noteworthy, too, that some of the chief promoters of overseas settlement in the reigns of James I and Charles I were afterwards found among the leaders of the parliamentary party.

James, in spite of his anxiety to keep on good terms with Spain and his frequent condescensions to that power, never admitted its claim to the sovereignty of North America. From the outset he encouraged the revival of Raleigh's design of

colonizing Virginia in spite of protests from the Spanish ambassador : and in 1606 he established a Royal Council for Virginia to supervise the activities of two companies, formed respectively by London and Plymouth merchants, to colonize the whole coast-line from Florida northwards. The London Company alone showed much activity. In 1606 it sent out the expedition which founded our first colony at Jamestown in Virginia. Owing to mismanagement, an unhealthy climate and an ill-chosen band of settlers, the experiment nearly failed once more ; it was only saved by the ability and devotion of John Smith, the energetic leader of the settlers, and by the company's prompt action in sending out fresh supplies and more settlers, chosen from a better class of the population. For another twenty years the settlers had a constant struggle against various difficulties ; but by 1635 the population had reached a total of five thousand ; and the success of England's first colony was assured.

The second oldest of our colonies was the result of an accident. In 1609, three years after the foundation of Jamestown, a relief ship with settlers and stores for Virginia ran ashore on the Bermuda Islands, untenanted save for the descendants of some pigs let loose on them by Portuguese seamen. The pigs supplemented the scanty provisions of the Virginian settlers and the islands were a convenient port of call for

relief ships: accordingly, in spite of Spanish protests, the Bermudas were annexed. In the next reign, so Marvell tells, Bermuda proved "an isle . . . far kinder than our own . . . safe from the storms and prelate's rage," for those who prized "the Gospel's pearl" above the Laudian.

Once the course of colonial adventure had set westward Englishmen were not slow to follow it up. For some time, unfortunately, the lure of immense treasures said to exist on the banks of the Orinoco in Guiana tended to divert their minds from more profitable fields. Raleigh, the last of Elizabeth's courtly adventurers, trespassed on a Spanish preserve in a fruitless search for this Eldorado in 1618; and his temerity, thanks to his Sovereign's complaisance to Spain, cost him his life: others, with little more success, attempted to form settlements on the coast of Guiana. The failure of these attempts, however, had the advantage of turning some of the settlers' eyes to the less jealously guarded islands in the West Indies. In 1623 Thomas Warner, despairing of the prospects in Guiana, took possession of St. Kitts, one of the Leeward Islands. In 1627 Sir William Courteen, a London merchant, sent an expedition to plant Barbados in the Windward Islands, already, in 1605, formally annexed by an English sea-captain. Those who emigrated thither resorted to the island, according to Clarendon, "only to be

quiet and to be free from the noise and oppression in England, and without any ill-thought against the king ; ” and they very soon made Barbados England’s most lucrative possession in the West. In 1627 all the Windward and Leeward Islands were formally granted by royal charter to Lord Carlisle, who by 1632 had planted colonies in three of the islands. Two years before Lord Warwick, Carlisle’s chief rival in colonizing schemes and a leader of the Puritan and anti-Spanish party, had combined with Pym and others to plant Providence Island off the coast of Central America, partly for settlement, but chiefly as a base from which to attack Spanish trade in Elizabethan style. For ten years the settlers held their own, but were finally rooted out by a strong force of Spaniards.

On the mainland, immediately north of the first plantation in Virginia, the territory known as Maryland was granted in 1632 to Lord Baltimore, a Roman Catholic peer, who made his colony “ a land of sanctuary ” for persecuted members of his own religion and other dissenting bodies. In the previous decade the first two Puritan settlements, of which a more particular account will be given later, had been established in New England. Further north, Gilbert’s declaration of English sovereignty over Newfoundland had remained an empty claim till 1610, when London and Bristol merchants received a colonizing grant of the island. But

though they established some isolated settlements of English colonists on the east, even they found it impossible to assert dominion over the French fishermen who every summer occupied their accustomed drying grounds on the west shore; and for more than a century the full sovereignty of the island was disputed by England and France. Still less successful was James in making good his claims to Nova Scotia, or Acadia, as the French called it. He tried to fill up the land with emigrants from his native Scotland, offering Nova Scotia baronetcies in his newly established order as an inducement to promoters of the scheme. But few of his canny countrymen were to be tempted to the expensive undertaking by the barren title; and in 1632 Charles I abandoned Acadia to Louis XIII.

The King himself and his ministers, it will be noticed, took very little direct part in founding colonies. Following the Elizabethan precedent the King gave charters to those undertaking colonizing schemes, partly as a means of retaining his sovereign rights over lands overseas occupied by Englishmen, partly as a protection to the grantees against interference by other Englishmen and as a safeguard against foreign intervention. But all the risk and most of the profit of such undertakings was left to the proprietors who obtained the royal charters, the wording of which often seemed to divest the King himself of all future control. Lord Baltimore, for

example, in the Maryland charter was given full disposition of all lands, the prerogative of pardon and the right of creating barons, of appointing to all offices, of declaring war and of levying, with the consent of the colonists, all necessary taxes. At first blush such extensive privileges, reproduced more or less in other charters, seemed to leave little connection between the distant colony and the mother country. Even the slight hold of the Royal Council of Virginia, established in 1606, over the Jamestown settlers was abolished three years later, when the London Company was granted unfettered authority. These wide powers to the adventurers were almost a necessity in the early days of colonization, which was a risky and expensive business and would not have been undertaken without the promise of ample privileges and large returns to the promoters. In practice, however, the King still retained a hold over these proprietors. Most of them were great noblemen or merchants whose homes were in England and who rarely visited their overseas possessions. Hence they were always within reach of the King and could not safely exceed their duties as subjects: the same applied also, with one notable exception to be spoken of later, to the chartered companies.

Moreover, the Stuarts soon came to realize that, if the plantations were to remain part of their empire, some limitation must be put to the wide rights granted by charter. In 1624 James,

finding that Virginia was getting out of hand and was being mismanaged by the London Company, revoked the charter and resumed to himself the right of nominating the governor and council of the plantation. Charles I took an even higher line. In the year of his accession he issued a proclamation declaring the new plantations "to be a parte of Our Royal Empire discended uppon Us and undoubtedlie belonginge and appertaininge unto Us," and, particularly in regard to Virginia, declared that its government should not be "comytred to anie Companie or Corporation, to whom it may be proper to trust Matters of Trade and Commerce, but cannot bee fitt or safe to communicate the ordering of State Affairs, be they of never soe ever Meane Consequence." In the West Indian Islands also, contrary to the terms of the charters, the Crown insisted on at least approving of the governors appointed by Lord Carlisle and his heirs. But the chief hold of the Crown on the colonies was by means of commercial regulations intended to secure for England all the advantages of colonial trade. The colonies were expected to produce raw materials, especially naval stores, exclusively for the English markets, and in return to buy articles of English manufacture. The Stuart Kings were indeed unable to prevent the cultivation of tobacco, to which they had a personal objection, in Virginia, and, as Charles I wittily put it, all their measures with that object "ended in

smoke": for the tobacco-crop, so lucrative to the Virginians, was well-pleasing to their English subjects, if we may trust a contemporary statement that by 1614 7,000 tobacco shops had appeared in London alone. At least the Stuarts secured their object of confining the colonists to the English market for their products and compelling them to import what they needed from England, restrictions partly enforced by the royal navy, partly encouraged by the advantage given to the colonists of a protected market in England.

The charters, it is also to be noticed, were given solely by the King and were revocable solely at his good pleasure. Parliament had nothing to do with the foundation of our early colonies, and though it tried to interfere with the affairs of Virginia in 1623 it was promptly told by the King that these were none of its business; a rebuff that was accepted without question. Even as late as 1732 Walpole objected to the discussion of the Georgia charter in Parliament as an encroachment on the royal prerogative. The point became of considerable importance later in the eighteenth century, when Parliament attempted to legislate for the colonies; for the colonies took a firm stand on their right of being independent, in all internal matters, of a Parliament to which they owed nothing and in which they had no representation. But though at first the colonies had nothing to do with Parliament,

that did not imply that they acquiesced in having no voice in their own affairs. The King and his executive were represented by a governor and executive council appointed either by the Crown or by the proprietors under their royal charter. But from the outset the earliest settlers insisted on their rights as Englishmen to have representative institutions to decide on the taxes and the laws which were to govern their little communities. Only thirteen years after the foundation of Jamestown we hear that "a house of burgesses broke out in Virginia." Five years later that same house of burgesses declared that it alone could grant taxes. By the very charter granted to Lord Baltimore in 1632, his power of making laws for Maryland was subject to the approval of the "Free-Men of the said province"; and two years later the assembly there was enforcing its full claim. Barbados also had its popular assembly drawn from the first settlers. In some cases popular control went even further. When Warwick planted Trinidad and Tobago he promised the emigrants that they should elect their governor as "one of the privileges for which they left England." Even Providence Island, though started chiefly as a military station against the Spaniards, had its popular assembly during the brief ten years of its existence as an English colony. Thus early in English colonial history the colonists, save in matters affecting all parts of the empire, acknowledged no authority

in the homeland besides the King and learned to carry their English tradition of freedom and responsibility to even greater lengths than they had found possible in the England of the early Stuarts.

Nowhere is this result more apparent than in the important colonies, still to be noticed, of New England. Their origin was quite different from that of the other colonies. Here it was not a case of promoters sending out settlers to develop a speculative property, but of settlers going of their own accord to find a home where they could order their lives more according to their own liking. The band that went out in the *Mayflower* in 1620 belonged, for the most part, to a congregation of Puritan farmers and tradesmen, who, twelve years before, had left their village of Scrooby in Lincolnshire to find a more congenial form of worship in Holland. There they had a hard struggle to make a living and found no friendly welcome from the Dutch; so they decided to return to England and try their luck further afield. From Sir Edwin Sandys, a man of Puritan leanings in the Virginia Company, they obtained leave to settle in the extreme north of the Company's territory, which then extended up to Delaware Bay. The hundred pilgrims who finally ventured to cross the Atlantic sailed from Plymouth in the *Mayflower* on September 6, 1620, and reached Cape Cod two months later. This was further north

than they had intended to go, but the spot pleased them well and they decided to abide at New Plymouth, as they fondly called their landing-place. In their case no governor had been appointed by the Company or by royal charter ; no constitution had been laid down for them. But during the voyage they had themselves made a compact, drawn up in writing on November 11, 1621, at Cape Cod, to this effect : “ We, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereigne Lord, King James, having undertaken for the glorie of God and the advancement of the Christian faith and honour of our King and countrie, a voyage to plant the first colonie in the Northernne part of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves into a civill body politick . . . [to enact laws] for the generall good of the Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.” In accord with this, the first approach to a written constitution in English history, they elected William Bradford, one of their own number, as governor, an office which he held for thirty-five years. Their numbers were at first so small that they had no need of a representative assembly : but the whole population, as in the case of the old Greek city States, met at stated town meetings to pass laws and decide on the common interests. Apart from the allegiance which they voluntarily swore to the King, they

had less formal ties with England than any others of the early settlers. A terribly hard winter for their first, in which half the small band of a hundred perished, tested their staunchness ; after that they never looked back.

The Massachusetts Bay settlement was an even more direct result of the dissatisfaction with the political and religious state of England. In spite of the grant of the Petition of Right in 1627 the King's power in Church and State seemed an impregnable obstacle to those who had aspirations towards a simpler form of worship and wider secular liberty. As John Winthrop wrote in his arguments for leaving England, "the Church hath noe place left to flie into but the wilderness. . . . This Land growes weary of her Inhabitants, soe as man, whoe is the most pretious of all creatures, is here more vile and base then the earth we treade upon, and of less prise among us then an horse or a sheep ;" while his son, in agreeing to follow his father, declared that "for myself, I have seen so much of the vanity of the world, that I esteem no more of the diversities of countries, than as so many inns ; . . . and I shall call that my country, where I may most glorify God, and enjoy the presence of my dearest friends." There were many of like mind, especially in the eastern counties ; some, surely not the least worthy, stayed on, in the hope of making England a home for saints, and a few years later became

the backbone of the Eastern Counties' Association, the instrument of God's holy purpose, so they thought ; others, in despair of England, resolved to seek a freer home overseas. These obtained a grant of the territory now covered by the state of Massachusetts. Before sailing they took the important decision of not only carrying their charter along with them but of making the head-quarters of the company in America instead of London, thus depriving the King of his most effective means of control over their affairs, and assuring to themselves almost unlimited independence. An advance party of the emigrants sailed in 1628 ; the main body under Winthrop, 900 all told, the largest band of colonists that had yet crossed the sea from England, started in the spring of 1630 and made the land at Salem, near Boston. From the first this colony at Salem became the rallying-point of the discontented Puritans and parliamentarians from England. Within four years the settlement already numbered 4,000, and within twelve, at the beginning of the Civil War, it had attained to 16,000. Like the pilgrims of the *Mayflower* at New Plymouth, it was a free and independent community, electing its own governor and officials and making its own laws. But though the majority were free in this respect, they were at least as intolerant in their religious regulations as Laud himself in England. Dissensions soon arose ; and several

parties of those who could not agree with the rigid tenets of the majority hived off to found separate settlements in Connecticut and Rhode Island. Charles I and Laud also realized how little hold they had on these pestilent rebels against their own civil and religious system, and set up a new Commission for Plantations to control them. In order to check the flow of malcontents overseas, this Commission forbade anyone to leave the country without licence, and attempted to impose Laud's ecclesiastical authority over New England. But the Commission had no means of enforcing its decisions, and when, in 1638, it required Winthrop to return the Charter for reconsideration of its terms with a view to strengthening the royal control over the colonists' proceedings, he and his associates respectfully declined to part with it. There was no means of coercing them without the exercise of force, which the King was in no position to employ.

Thus within the first half of the seventeenth century the greater part of the North American seaboard had been occupied by English colonists. Their rivals in this quarter, besides the Spaniards in Florida and the West Indies, were the French and Dutch. Canada had been explored by Cartier a century earlier, but was first settled by Champlain two years after the English came to Jamestown; while in 1623 the Dutch had founded New Holland, an ailing

little colony on the Hudson River. But in any disputes with those competitors the English settlers more than held their own. The Civil Wars in England, by diverting attention from America and leaving the new settlements more than ever to themselves, also helped to develop their self-confidence. As far as sympathies went, Virginia and Maryland, as well as Barbados, were on the King's side ; the four New England Colonies, as would be expected, were for the Parliament. But neither side took any active part for King or Parliament ; while the New Englanders took action significant of their growing independence. In 1643, on the plea that, owing to the "sad distractions in England," they could no longer hope for the "comfortable fruits of protection" from home, Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut and Newhaven entered into a confederation for "offence and defence, mutuall advice and succour." This was a virtual repudiation of English jurisdiction and protection, doubtless in anticipation of further claims from the King, should he prove victorious. The confederation did not live long, but it was the first sign of a tendency which gradually led to the revolution of the eighteenth century.

The Commonwealth, however, especially when Cromwell became Protector, was little minded to stand insubordination from the colonies and had the means, in a strong navy, of enforcing its views. The royalist colonies were soon com-

pelled to get rid of their "malignant" governors and to recognize the authority of Parliament; and even the more troublesome New Englanders, though dealt with more tenderly, were made to realize that independence would no more be admitted by their friends now in power at home than by the "man of blood" lately beheaded. Cromwell himself stimulated interest at home in the overseas possessions by his efforts to encourage a fresh stream of emigration from both Scotland and England to America, by the capture of Jamaica in 1655 and by his vigorous attempt to colonize it and develop its resources. In the same year the New Englanders drove the French out of Acadia, a conquest retained by Cromwell, but again abandoned twelve years later by Charles II. But the Commonwealth's most important measure relating to the colonies was the Navigation Ordinance passed by Parliament in 1651, a measure which, without introducing any new principle, reduced to an effective system the control aimed at over colonial trade and navigation.

The principle of regulating colonial trade in the interests of the mother country was, as we have seen, nothing new. The Stuarts at the outset had attempted above all things to maintain their hold on the new settlements by commercial ties. They enjoined on the planters, it is true without much success, the cultivation of products, such as naval stores, likely to be

useful for English purposes: and at the same time they protected their output of tobacco and other goods by giving them favourable terms or even a monopoly on the English market. The main object of the Navigation Ordinance was to encourage English trade and shipping and to aim a blow at the great carrying trade of our Dutch rivals: no goods were to be imported into England from the plantations or from any other country outside Europe except on ships owned and manned by English subjects, nor could any European goods be shipped to England or English possessions except on English ships or ships of the country of origin. This ordinance was vehemently objected to by the American colonies. Virginia actually had a commercial treaty of its own with New Holland; Rhode Island and Connecticut also found their profit in trade with the Dutch; while Massachusetts declared, in spite of the parliamentary ordinance, that all nations might trade with her. For some time it was almost impossible to make the colonies observe the new regulations; and it required a display of force by the English fleet and the capture of some Dutch ships found in a New England port before they were brought to obedience. For nearly two centuries control over the trade of the plantations, inaugurated as a system by this ordinance, remained the guiding principle of England's colonial policy, the only change being in an increasing rigidity of the

control. At the Restoration, when most of the parliamentary ordinances were ignored, this one was re-enacted and strengthened. The principle of "enumerated articles,"—at first sugar, tobacco and five others, but subsequently extended,—was introduced: none of the articles, the products of the plantations, so enumerated could be exported to any other country but England. At the same time the colonies were forbidden to import foreign products that had not first been brought to England. Thus in trade matters Parliamentary Acts were for the first time, as distinct from royal orders, made applicable to the colonies: at this time also the policy of treating the whole trade of the empire as a subject of comprehensive regulation was given full scope. The conception underlying the policy is clearly expressed in the preamble to one of Charles II's Acts on trade, where its object is stated to be "for the maintaining a greater correspondence and kindnesse betweene them [England and the plantations] and keeping them in a firmer dependance upon it."

Clarendon, Charles II's first minister after the Restoration, states in his *Defence*, "Soon after the Restoration I used all the endeavours I could to bring His Majesty to have a great esteem for his Plantations and to encourage their improvement." To do Charles justice, he required little persuasion, for he was in entire sympathy with his subjects in their enthusiasm

for the development of trade and in the increased interest they took in the colonies, chiefly as a source of wealth to the mother country. Different as they were, too, in almost every other respect, many of his principal advisers, notably his brother James, Clarendon, Shaftesbury and Albemarle all regarded the administration of the colonies and the tightening of their ties with England as one of the most important functions of government. In the first year of his reign Charles set up a "Council of Forraigne Plantations," which with various changes of form was the direct precursor of the modern colonial office. Shaftesbury was its first president and the ablest during the reign : but Charles himself always took a large part in its deliberations and showed a knowledge and sagacity in forming decisions surpassed by none of the members. The new spirit of sympathy with the interests of the colonies and of keenness to harmonize them with those of England are shown in the directions issued by the King for the conduct of this Council's business. They were to take stock of all rights claimed by the colonies and keep careful record of all their charters, to require from the governors frequent reports of their affairs, to investigate what lessons were to be learned from foreign methods of colonial government, and in sum, "to applie yourselves to all prudentiall meanes for the rendering these dominions usefull to England and England help-

full to them." The governors appointed by Charles were for the most part efficient ; and, after some initial difficulties, the Navigation Acts were generally enforced, except in the case of Massachusetts.

Charles II's reign is also notable for a renewed outburst of colonization. Carolina, to the south of the original colony of Virginia, was planted in 1663, with a constitution drawn up by Shaftesbury's friend, the philosopher John Locke ; a constitution providing for an order of nobles termed *caciques* and *landgraves* and recognizing the perpetual slavery of white indentured servants, but, it is not surprising to know, never actually put into practice. Three other colonies were also inaugurated owing to the conquest of New Holland from the Dutch. Two of these colonies, New York and New Jersey, were granted to James Duke of York in 1664, before they had actually fallen into our hands, while the third, Pennsylvania, forming the hinterland to these colonies and the first English settlement not actually on the seaboard, was granted in 1681 to Charles's Quaker friend, William Penn, in acknowledgment of a debt of £10,000. Thus by the end of Charles's reign the whole of North America between the Alleghany mountains and the sea was under the English Crown, while as successors to the Dutch the English had inherited their alliance with the Five Nations of Iroquois, an alliance of value

to them in the forthcoming struggle with the French settlers in Canada.

The terms of Charles II's grants to his brother in 1664 and to Penn in 1681 illustrate the determination of the King and his advisers not to alienate too much of their control over their overseas dominions. In both these grants for the first time provision is made for appeals from any judgment of the colonial courts to be brought before the King; and this still remains as one of the few definite bonds of union between the dominions and Great Britain. The grant to Penn, which is prefaced by a statement of Penn's object, "a commendable desire to enlarge our English Empire, and promote such usefull commodities as may bee of benefitt to us and our Dominions, as alsoe to reduce the Savage Natives by gentle and just manners to the love of civill Societie and Christian Religion," goes even further in preserving the connection. For, in addition to the appeal clause, it enacts that the King reserves the right of pardon in cases of treason or murder, that the laws of England should be current in the colony until new laws, which were to be subject to the royal veto, were passed by the colonists, and lastly that, with the right of internal taxation granted to the colonists, a concurrent right of imposing taxes and customs duties was reserved to the English Parliament. This last provision, little noticed at the time, became of the utmost importance a

century later, when the right of taxation was actually exercised by the British Parliament. Indeed, contrary to the practice of the earlier Stuarts, Charles II's policy tended more and more to obliterate the distinction between the authority of the Crown alone in direct relation with the colonies and that of the Crown in Parliament, although the colonies themselves never lost sight of the distinction.

Pennsylvania is also interesting for the spirit of broad-minded tolerance in which Penn inaugurated the government. Instead of ignoring the rights of the original inhabitants, as had too often been the practice elsewhere, Penn had a solemn meeting with the Indian chiefs under the "Great Tree" and there agreed to give them fair payments for rights they gave up and a solemn guarantee of their remaining privileges. Nor was this an idle engagement, for meticulous observance of Indian rights became traditional in the colony. Again in the constitution granted to the settlers he enacted, by a provision remarkable and almost unique in those intolerant days, that there should be complete "Freedom of their Consciences . . . and that all Persons who also profess to believe in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the World, shall be capable (notwithstanding their other Perswasions and Practices in Point of Conscience and Religion) to serve this Government in any Capacity:" and as a safeguard against hasty innovation he

enacted further that this proviso "shall be kept and remain, without any alteration, inviolably for ever."

Charles's difficulties were chiefly in relation to New England. Ever since the foundation of Massachusetts the settlers had adopted a tone and practice of independence quite incompatible with any semblance of royal sovereignty in the colony. Many of their laws were repugnant to those of England, as, for example, their exclusion of the Common Prayer Book, their restrictions on the franchise, the imposition of the death penalty for certain religious opinions; their laws and writs ran in the name of the colony instead of in the King's; and they had abolished the oath of allegiance to the Crown. Though they had left England in search of religious liberty, their own enactments were more intolerant than anything to be found in England during the height of the Laudian system, for instance the enactment condemning 82 opinions, "some blasphemous, others erroneous, all unsafe," while nine others, termed "unwholesome," were consigned "to the devil in hell, whence they came." The Navigation Acts were largely a dead letter with them; they openly flouted the royal authority in annexing Maine and New Hampshire, which had actually been granted to other proprietors by royal charter. Massachusetts indeed was in all this the chief offender; Connecticut, less fanatical in religion,

being far more amenable to authority. As a corrective of these abuses and in order to restore the royal authority, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Rhode Island were given separate charters, which to some extent took them out of the orbit of Massachusetts. Sterner measures were taken with the chief delinquent. From the beginning of the reign the Council of Plantations had been considering means of bringing Massachusetts to order. After an abortive royal commission in 1664, Edward Randolph was sent out in 1676 to try and enforce observance of the Navigation Acts ; but he was met with the most determined opposition. Finally proceedings were taken against the colony for its unconstitutional proceedings ; it was declared to have forfeited its charter and was placed under an absolute governor.

Meanwhile in the neighbouring colony of New York care had been taken to avoid the possibility of such licence. The first governor of that state wrote home that "he had set up a school of better religion and obedience to God and King than were to be found in New England." It was accordingly determined by James II to temper the licence of Massachusetts with the discipline of New York by bringing under one government all the troublesome New England colonies and the tamer settlements recently established in New York and New Jersey. The governor

chosen for this difficult enterprise was Sir Edmond Andros, a capable but tactless administrator. His rule was short lived, for at the Revolution in 1688 the Bostonians rose against him, put him in prison and then shipped him home to England ; and with his departure ended this experiment of interfering with the liberties of a too independent colony. William III, who had less inclination than his two predecessors to adopt extreme measures with the colonies, granted a new charter to Massachusetts, and even sanctioned its incorporation of Maine and New Hampshire.

Charles II's interest in commercial and colonial expansion and his policy of bringing it more under royal control are also illustrated in his relations with the East India Company. By the end of James I's reign the Company had been almost entirely driven out of the eastern archipelago by the Dutch, whose unavenged massacre of the English Company's agents at Amboyna in 1623 first provoked the national hatred against them. Thereafter the Company carried on its trade almost exclusively with India, where it gradually increased the number of its factories through the favour of the Mogul emperors, gained by the protection its fleets afforded to the pilgrims to Mecca. For many years it had followed Sir Thomas Roe's advice and, unlike the Portuguese and Dutch, eschewed territorial possessions. In 1639, however, Francis Day,

one of its factors, acquired the site of Madras from a neighbouring rajah and so may be said to have founded our Indian empire. But so little did the Company welcome this accession of territory that it put the presumptuous factor on its black books ; and even thirty years later agreed only under royal pressure to accept the lease of Bombay at the trifling rental of £10.

Until the Restoration the affairs of the Company, in spite of a few highly prosperous voyages, had not flourished. The first two Stuarts were constantly interfering with its monopoly, when they were in need of money, by granting, for value received, special licences to wealthy courtiers empowering them to trade with the East. During the Civil War the Company was hopelessly divided between Royalist and Parliamentary shareholders and was in danger of losing its charter, until in 1655 Cromwell decided to renew it. But with the accession of Charles II it entered upon the most prosperous period of its history. Under the able direction of Sir Josiah Child, who ruled the Company with almost absolute power, it held its own against the swarm of interlopers, such as Chatham's grandfather, Thomas Pitt, who tried to encroach on its monopoly of trade in India. For it could always rely on the royal protection and the favourable judgments of such judges as Jeffreys, who unblushingly identified the Company's interests with the King's, and, in a noted judg-

ment defining its rights, compared the misdeeds of the interlopers with the "late hellish conspiracy" of the Rye House plotters.

Support from home was especially valuable to the Company at this time, for in India it had anxious moments. The Mogul empire, that had hitherto protected it, was beginning to break up, and the Mahratta raiders and other "country powers" rising into prominence had no respect for its privileges. The new policy, forced on the unwilling directors, of holding territorial possessions on the east and west coasts, then proved fortunate in giving them strongholds as a defence against marauders, and not merely against marauders, but also against a new European rival. In 1664 Louis XIV's great minister, Colbert, had founded the French Compagnie des Indes, which within eleven years had acquired factories at Surat north of Bombay, Pondichery near Madras and Chandernagore on the Hugli, where the English also had a factory. From the outset they aimed at becoming the predominant power in India. Fortunately our old rivals, the Dutch, made it their business to oppose the French, and during their long wars with Louis XIV bore the brunt of the fighting against them in the East as well as in Europe. Thus by the end of James II's reign the East India Company seemed to be in an impregnable position at home, enjoying as it did the full favour of the Government, while in the East,

though threatened by enemies both native and European, its battles were being largely fought by others ; and it had taken the first halting steps towards its subsequent development as the greatest power in the Orient.

During the Stuart era of barely a century the foundations of the British Empire had been well and truly laid. Though late-comers in the race for colonial and commercial advantages in a newly discovered world, the English had not suffered thereby. In America they possessed no gold-mines, which in time proved the undoing of Spain, but had secured the pick of those regions on the mainland where Europeans could best thrive and work. They had settled Barbados and Jamaica, two of the richest of the West India islands, and had the lion's share of the inexhaustible fishing grounds off Newfoundland. In the East, the primary object of all the early explorers, they were so firmly established that they had gained a large share of the trade and secured a foothold on both shores of the great Indian peninsula. Even more significant than their success in acquisition was their method of adventure. Starting when the Elizabethan tradition of individual enterprise and gallant devotion to an idea was still alive, they had asked for no promise of support from a powerful Government in their search for gain or for liberty of conscience, but staked only their own lives and fortunes in their attempts. Thus from the

outset the venturers in America or the East felt that success depended wholly on their own exertions. It was fortunate too that, when all these ragged edges of adventure had to be brought into relation with one another and the home-land, a certain measure of discipline and organization was introduced by the later Stuart monarchs. Just that touch of paternal government was needed to protect the new settlements in their infancy and to recall to Englishmen at home their responsibility to their adventurous brethren overseas. Had this paternalism been prolonged, as it was in the case of other countries, it might have brought the same blight on the colonies and the mother-country as befell the Spanish possessions. Happily the Whig Revolution came just in time.

CHAPTER III

THE FOUNDATION OF OUR INDIAN EMPIRE

HITHERTO the pioneers of the British Empire had found little to contend with save untamed nature and their own inexperience. True there had been rivals in colonial development ; but of these the Spaniards and Portuguese were decaying powers even in the time of Elizabeth, and the Dutch never became dangerous competitors in America. In the East alone the Dutch had at first outdistanced the English, but in the second half of the seventeenth century had so exhausted themselves in the struggle with France that they ceased to be formidable. By the time of the Glorious Revolution France alone remained the serious rival of English enterprise overseas. With this rival England's main struggle, lasting over a century, then began.

Among the first-fruits, as we have seen, of the French monarchy's consolidation of power under Louis XIV were increased control over French undertakings abroad and a vigorous attempt to make them more efficient. In India this became very apparent in the activities of Colbert's *Compagnie des Indes*, which, except in name,

was a mere department of government. The royal commissary and the directors were nominees of the Crown, while the so-called shareholders, having a fixed return secured to them from the tobacco monopoly, had little interest in the Company's trading success. As long as Colbert directed its policy it prospered, but, when Colbert was dead and European wars absorbed all France's energies, it was neglected and fell on evil days, only recovering the factories it had lost to the Dutch at the peace of Ryswick in 1697. But during their period of rivalry with the Dutch the French had made two acquisitions, the islands of Mauritius and Bourbon, that were to prove of great value in the forthcoming struggle with the English Company: for these islands afforded accessible harbours of refuge for their fleets during the dangerous monsoon period, whereas England had nothing nearer than St. Helena; and security in India depended on constant command of the sea.

The real struggle between England and France in India did not begin till after the peace of Utrecht, when the government in Paris again had leisure to occupy itself with the *Compagnie*. While the Mogul empire remained with the prestige it still had until the death of Aurangzebe in 1707, the European traders were still too much at the mercy of the Mogul emperors to enter upon any ambitious schemes of their own. But after his death the empire, which had for some time

been showing signs of decay, began rapidly to crumble away. The Imperial viceroys, the Nizam of Hyderabad in the centre, and the rulers of the Carnatic on the east coast and of Bengal and Oude in the north made themselves practically independent; while the warlike Hindu tribes, Mahrattas, Rajputs, Sikhs, did not spare even the emperor's court in their ravaging forays through the length and breadth of India. In the ensuing scramble for power among the ruins of the empire came the great opportunity for Europeans; for their organizing capacity and military science gave a decisive advantage to the native princes they chose to support and enabled them to claim large rewards in wealth or territory.

At this conjuncture, as so often happened in their history, the French found leaders quick to seize the occasion. Dupleix came to India in 1730 and for the next twenty years, first as governor of Chandernagore, then of Pondichery, exercised a decisive influence on the French fortunes in India. His policy, unlike that of the English Company, aimed at conquest rather than commerce, coupled with the elimination of the English as a power in India. He sought to attain his ends by gradually acquiring control, under the cloak of alliances, over the neighbouring native states. In another sphere La Bourdonnais, the French naval commander, was doing equally valuable work. As governor of

Mauritius and Ile Bourbon he developed the resources of these islands and increased their utility as naval bases for the fleet, which, on the declaration of hostilities, he organized and commanded. During the war that lasted from 1744 to 1748 all this preparatory work bore fruit. The English in the Carnatic were isolated by Dupleix's system of alliances and found no help from the sea, where their squadrons were inferior in numbers and leadership to La Bourdonnais' fleet. Madras, the first English settlement in India, was captured and only recovered at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in return for Louisburg won by the New Englanders on the other side of the globe.

The truce between the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle and the outbreak of the Seven Years War was barely observed in India. Dupleix, intent on his ambitious schemes, secured for himself the administration and revenues of three provinces, practically appointed a new ruler of the Carnatic as well as a Nizam of Hyderabad, and entirely controlled that great central state through Bussy, a French officer sent to organize and command its army. But now the English began to take a leaf out of his book and to set up a nominee of their own in the Carnatic: above all they discovered the military genius of the twenty-six year old civilian, Robert Clive. In 1751, by his gallant defence of Arcot, Clive was able to instal the English candidate in the Carnatic,

and next year he and Stringer Lawrence defeated the French commander at Trichinopoly. In 1753 the French themselves gave the deathblow to Dupleix's great schemes. La Bourdonnais had already been recalled in disgrace after his victory at Madras: now an order from Paris came that the policy of conquest must cease; Bussy was withdrawn from the Nizam's court and Dupleix himself recalled.

This sudden reversal of policy and this recall of the ablest statesman France ever had in India, just when he was independently working out a scheme which might have gained an Indian empire for France, illustrates the essential weakness of the old French centralized system, as compared with the greater scope allowed to the individual on the spot by the laxer English methods. When Versailles had decided against a policy no one overseas dared to pursue it: Dupleix succumbed to the system; Clive himself could hardly have stood against it. Thus France threw away her chances and by 1756 the English Company was once more in the ascendant, with its more numerous and more prosperous factories, its more experienced officials, and above all with the man who "had never learned the arts of war or that skill in doing nothing which only forty years of service can bring, . . . that heaven-born genius," Clive.

The men on the spot did the work; Clive had Bengal at his mercy after his victory of

Plassey, Coote by the battle of Wandewash secured the Carnatic and drove the French out of their last stronghold, Pondichery. But even they would not have won so easily and so quickly had they not had Pitt at home to watch over their interests. Pitt always had a warm corner in his heart for India, ever since his old grandfather had told him as a boy of his "ruffling" methods at Madras; and, though it was primarily the Company's business, he took care that Clive and Coote should get the reinforcements they needed, and above all that our squadrons on the Indian station under Watson, Pocock and Steevens should be kept up to the strength required to retain that command of the sea we had lost in the previous war. By the middle of 1761 all Dupleix's great schemes of empire had vanished into thin air and the French had not a foot of territory to call their own in India. At the peace of Paris indeed they recovered their factories, but were not allowed to keep an armed man in India.

The English Company had, on the other hand, been left by the Seven Years War the dominant European power in India; and, in addition, with large territorial responsibilities, for which neither its directors nor its officials were in the least fitted. Hitherto the aims and experience of the Company had been purely commercial, and even their small settlements at Madras and Bombay had been acquired unwillingly. Clive himself,

the conqueror of Bengal, was the first to doubt whether such a company was fitted to undertake the novel task of governing a large oriental population. Accordingly almost immediately after Plassey he proposed to Pitt that the Crown should take over the task of administration.

Pitt, unfortunately, was still too much intent on carrying on the war to pay much attention to the proposal ; he was probably also influenced by the fear that the already vast network of parliamentary corruption would be increased by the large amount of patronage such a new responsibility would entail. At any rate nothing came of the suggestion ; and the Company was left to drift along as best it could. Clive himself, their ablest servant, sailed home in 1760, having, it must be confessed, well feathered his own nest ; and during the next five years the mismanagement and corruption of the Company's clerks and factors, called upon, with very little direction from London, to contrive a system of government in Bengal, became a crying scandal. They ignored the interests of the natives whose taxes were poured into their coffers, accepted bribes and avoided payment of dues for their own private trade. Finally the titular Nawab of Bengal, in alliance with the neighbouring state of Oudh and the Great Mogul himself, rose against their oppression. The revolt was ruthlessly suppressed ; but the scandals had become so notorious that the Company felt bound to

introduce reforms. One man alone, Clive, had the strength of character and prestige to carry them through ; so, in spite of his unpopularity with the Directors, they sent him out once more with almost unlimited powers.

One of the chief reasons for the corruption of the Company's servants was the miserable scale of pay allowed them, which almost forced them to obtain a living by illegitimate methods. Clive very sensibly helped them to be more honest by improving their prospects ; at the same time he showed no mercy to attempts at insubordination, and by his courage and resolution suppressed a serious mutiny of dissatisfied officers. He also put the relations of the Company with the native rulers on a more satisfactory footing, and regularized its claim to the administration of Bengal. Hitherto the Company's dominion there had depended practically on the power of the strongest, as a result of the victory of Plassey : but in 1765 formal treaties were made with the nominal suzerain at Delhi whereby the Company was granted the overlordship of a large area round Calcutta and the right of collecting the revenue and administering civil justice in Bengal and the neighbouring provinces of Behar and Orissa ; in return the ruler of Delhi and the provincial viceroys were made the Company's pensionaries. Thus to all intents and purposes the Company was enabled to exercise full sovereign rights, under the

British Crown, over this large area in India, a right explicitly assumed in later Acts of Parliament. But for long the formal superiority of the Great Mogul was acknowledged and his head did not disappear from the coinage till 1835. Clive further strengthened the Company's position by giving protection to the neighbouring state of Oudh as a buffer against the dangerous Mahratta power further west.

Thus Clive may be said to have originated that peculiarly British form of administration known as a protectorate, thenceforward so common in India and elsewhere. Although in Bengal the system was eventually allowed to lapse into full British sovereignty, in other instances it has served a useful purpose. Its advantage is that during a time of transition it virtually places the government in the hands of British officials, without, however, entirely destroying the prestige of rulers to whom the native races are accustomed. In its method of administration the object of the protecting power is avowedly, not to ensure its own permanent domination, but to serve the interests of the protected population and help them to acquire the methods of self-government. With the preservation of at least the nominal authority of native institutions, the transition back to real native rule, after a period of probation, is thereby rendered easier.

Clive's second administration lasted barely

two years; but in that time he had remedied some abuses, laid the foundations of a better system and introduced a higher conception of the Company's responsibility. The nation itself also began to realize its own responsibility. Parliament turned its attention to Indian affairs, first in connection with Clive's administration; its committee of inquiry found no defence for some of his financial transactions, but concluded its report with the famous verdict "that Robert, Lord Clive did at the same time render great and meritorious services to his country." Soon, too, the Company's financial difficulties made it imperative for the Government to intervene. Lord North's Regulating Act of 1773 was accordingly passed, which provided that the Government might call on the East India Directors for copies of their correspondence with India, and that the right of appointment to the newly constituted offices of Governor-General and judges of a supreme court should be vested in the Crown. The Act was in many respects unsatisfactory, especially in not giving the Governor-General a deciding voice in his council and so, as in Hastings' case, leaving him at the mercy of a majority of his opponents; and in the ill-defined sphere of the supreme court: but it is notable in Indian history as the first direct recognition by Parliament of its responsibility for the East India Company's use of its powers over the natives of India.

Hastings, the greatest, as he was the first governor-general, was the only one who held office under this Act. He ruled India from 1774 to 1785 under almost incredible difficulties, having during the first four years to inaugurate an entirely new system of government for himself and his successors, and during the rest of his term to sustain almost alone the renewed attack made by France and her Indian allies on the English dominion in India; hampered, too, at every turn by a council in which he was in the minority, by a judiciary with ill-defined functions and by incapable and insubordinate governments in Bombay and Madras. But in the cabinet of his own mind he had principles of action which sustained him against all such difficulties: "Deliberate well;" as he once summed up these principles, "resolve with decision and completely, not by halves; but when your resolution is once formed, and in execution, never admit even a thought of withdrawing it." Under his rule a cleaner and more efficient government was introduced: he organized a better financial system, encouraged the study of Indian law and institutions, sought to secure the loyalty of native princes and the affection of the Indian masses by a sympathetic appreciation of their needs, and in sum, set to the long line of his successors a fine standard of personal disinterestedness and untiring devotion to the duties of his great office.

His greatest achievement was in preserving the English power in India during the war with France of 1778-83. He could expect no help from home, where the full resources of the nation were engaged in fighting the American rebels, and nearly the whole of Europe besides : against him were able French political and military officers sent to organize native armies. Suffren, one of France's great admirals, appeared on the coast ; Bussy, Dupleix's old henchman, returned with other abler French officers ; and a formidable confederacy was formed, including the Nizam of Hyderabad in the centre of India, the Mahrattas in the north-west and Haidar Ali of Mysore in the south. But Hastings was equal to all emergencies, partly by his own energy in organizing expeditions and inspiring their commanders to do the impossible, partly by the co-operation of Clive's old companion in arms, Sir Eyre Coote, who never met Haidar Ali and his son Tippoo, our most dangerous enemies, without defeating them, and of the gallant Hughes, who with an inferior fleet fought no less than five drawn engagements with Suffren. In the end all the French factories were once more captured ; and by 1783 India was the only part of the world where the French had been the losers, and where the English had gained instead of losing territory.

But Hastings had made mistakes. Left to his own resources, he had found his means all

too restricted for the struggle which sometimes ranged over Bombay, Madras, central India and Mysore ; and he adopted high-handed measures, barely justifiable even in his extremity. His frontier policy involved him in a somewhat questionable war with the Rohillas. But two of his expedients for obtaining money to carry on his later wars became especially notorious ; one was his exaction of a huge fine from the Rajah of Benares for delay in paying an extraordinary war levy ; the other was the pressure he exercised on the Begums of Oudh to make them disgorge a treasure claimed by his pensionary the Nawab. Charges based on these and other incidents of his administration formed the basis of the impeachment brought against him when he returned to England. The gravamen of the charges was vastly exaggerated by the vitriolic enmity of Francis, who had been his bitter opponent on the Calcutta council, and prompted the managers of the impeachment with every sinister interpretation of Hastings' actions that his ingenious malice could suggest. Hastings, after a long-drawn trial, was acquitted, not indeed, we may believe, because the House of Lords approved of all his methods, but from the conviction that in the terrible emergency that confronted him lay some excuse for actions that would be indefensible in normal circumstances. But the importance of the trial lies not so much in the actual verdict on the guilt

or innocence of Hastings as in its vindication of Parliament's right and duty to investigate all charges of oppression in the Company's sphere in India. It helped too to enlighten the nation on its responsibility for the subject races in India; and gave statesmen such as Burke and Fox the opportunity of laying down once for all the fundamental principles of our rule. "The determination of this night," said Fox, speaking to one of the charges, "will be attended by all Europe. The nations around us will form upon it their future measures with regard to their powers in India. . . . The rule held out to them they must no doubt consider as that by which they are in future to direct their conduct. . . . Is a governor in India to consult Puffendorf and Grotius? No. But I will tell you what he is to consult: the laws of nature—not the statutes to be found in those books, nor in any books—but those laws which are to be found in Europe, Africa and Asia, that are to be found amongst all mankind, those principles of equity and humanity implanted in our hearts which have their existence in the feelings of mankind that are capable of judging."

Before the trial had even begun the difficulties of Hastings' position in India had been implicitly recognized in Pitt's India Act of 1784, which did away with the absurdity of placing the governor-general at the mercy of his council. It also introduced more momentous changes

which further emphasized the nation's ultimate responsibility for the welfare of the Company's Indian territories. The shareholders and all the directors, save three, were for the future to be restricted to the decision of purely trade matters ; the three remaining directors were to form a secret committee to whom alone all administrative, military and financial operations were entrusted ; and they had to report all their proceedings and to take instructions from a Board of Control presided over by a minister of the Crown. This arrangement ensured that no political action could be taken in India without the knowledge and sanction of the government. The Company, however, were still allowed to retain their former patronage, owing to the well-grounded fear that parliamentary interference with appointments might lead to political corruption. This safeguard, however, was not entirely effective, since the political president of the Board of Control naturally had much influence with the directors : but at any rate the action of the first president, Dundas, in starting the flow of his Scottish compatriots into the old John Company's service proved all to the good ; a flow for which Edinburgh's gratitude is to this day commemorated in Pitt Street, Dundas Street and India Street. Pitt's Act was also notable for its declaration that " to pursue schemes of conquest and extension in India are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour and

policy of this nation." Our legislation has rarely enunciated general principles, and in actual practice this sentiment was not strictly observed, partly owing to circumstances beyond the nation's control; but it remained as a wholesome reminder to too ambitious governors.

Thus was founded almost by chance our Indian empire. Neither Newberrie and Fitch, the adventurous traders who made the hazardous journey overland to Delhi in the sixteenth century, nor the trading company founded at the end of Elizabeth's reign had any aim beyond commerce or dreamed of owning territory in India. For more than a century and a half the Company resisted any such idea and even doubted the policy of accepting proprietorship in the land at Madras and Bombay which barely exceeded the needs of their trading warehouses. The rivalry of the French and still more the collapse of the native power in Bengal after Clive's victory at Plassey alone drove them to assume protection rather than actual annexation; and it was only the necessity of defending that for which they had become responsible that led them to further annexations. Clive and Hastings laid down the first plans for carrying on the administration thus thrust upon them. But fortunately the British nation woke up, before it was too late, to its own responsibility for this romantic heritage, and thereafter became as truly master of India's destiny as of its own.

CHAPTER IV

GAIN AND LOSS OF AN EMPIRE IN AMERICA

. In America the serious rivalry between France and England began earlier than in India. In the same year that he had inaugurated an East India Company, Colbert, with logical precision, parcelled out French interests in the other hemisphere to a West Indian Company. This Company also, though nominally free, was entirely under royal control. During the second half of the seventeenth century the Canadian colony, by the paternal system instituted by Colbert and carried out by three notable administrators, the Governor Frontenac, the Intendant Talon, and the Bishop of Quebec, Laval, was vastly strengthened for its duel with the English settlers on its borders. Colonization was encouraged, industries developed, and the gospel preached with heroic self-devotion by Jesuit missionaries to the Indian tribes, who were also inspired with a wholesome respect for France by the great Onontio, as they called Frontenac, the first to rule them with the authority and sympathy they needed. The whole policy relating to the colony, sometimes down to minute

details, was elaborated in Paris and carried out by the royal agents, generally with unquestioning obedience and with full power over the colony's resources. No greater contrast could be imagined to the loose, almost planless methods of the English.

In the first round of the contest, which began with the accession of William III in 1689 and ended with the Peace of Ryswick eight years later, the French had the advantage. Frontenac, who had returned to be governor a second time, drove the English out of Port Royal, captured by them in the preceding year; when they ventured to sail up the St. Lawrence and demanded the surrender of Quebec, he repulsed them with contumely; he broke the power of their Indian allies of the Five Nations and captured their posts on Hudson Bay. But he died before the next round during the war of the Spanish Succession, leaving no one to fill his place, while the practical extinction of the French navy enabled the English fleet to give more effective support to the colonists. At the peace of Utrecht in 1713, Acadia (Nova Scotia) and Newfoundland were finally ceded to England; and the Hudson Bay Company's claim to posts in the very heart of the fur-trading area of Canada was once more admitted. Except for the support given by our supremacy at sea, these successes were due almost entirely to the efforts of the New Englanders.

During the next thirty years of peace France did much to recover her ground. She still had the advantage in military schemes of a settled policy planned at the centre and executed by almost absolute administrators on the spot. She largely neutralized the loss of Nova Scotia by fomenting disputes as to the boundaries of the province and employing Jesuit emissaries to foster discontent among the French Catholic inhabitants. On Cape Breton Island Louisburg was fortified to command the entrance to the St. Lawrence and serve as a harbour of refuge for the privateers who soon made Louisburg notorious as the "Dunkirk of America." But her most insidious method of undermining the English power was by taking advantage of La Salle's discovery in 1682 of an almost continuous waterway from the Canadian lakes down the Ohio and the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. By gradually building a chain of forts along this route, she calculated on not only linking up her separated possessions of Canada and Louisiana on the Gulf, but also on permanently cutting off the English sea-board colonies from access to the interior of the continent. At the same time the approaches to Canada from New York or New England were carefully guarded by another chain of forts. Even the numerical inferiority of the French to the English in America was to some extent modified by State-

aided immigration, for between 1714 and 1742 the population of Canada was nearly trebled.

While these systematic plans were being carried out in French America, the English colonies were left pretty much to themselves, to muddle along in their rough and ready fashion. During the first half of the eighteenth century responsibility for the colonies fell to the Duke of Newcastle, who had little knowledge even of their geography and less interest in their affairs. The only colonial question to which the home Government paid serious attention was fiscal. The Navigation Acts were continually being strengthened and the list of "enumerated" products that could be exported only to England, extended: the valuable trade of the American colonies with the French sugar islands was forbidden, in the interest of the Jamaica planters, by the Molasses Act of 1733. As far as these Acts were enforced, they were exceedingly unpopular in the colonies, and it was perhaps fortunate that, owing to the incompetence or lethargy of Newcastle, they were to a large extent a dead letter. As for plans to meet the French danger, the Duke of Newcastle had little conception of their need, while the colonies, more conscious of the peril, were too disunited to decide on common action. Enjoying representative institutions without executive responsibility, their assemblies spent much of their time and energy in

quarrelling with their royal governors or with one another.

The best that can be said for the eighteenth century system of colonial administration is that it left the colonists free to work out their own destinies and gain the commercial prosperity and self-reliance necessary for the assertion of their rights, when they were threatened. But, for the time being, one of growing peril, no intelligible policy was enforced on the colonies from home, nor were they seriously encouraged to take responsibility or unite among themselves.

One reason no doubt for the neglect of colonial interests during this period of peace was the English ministers' preoccupation with Spain. There were many causes of quarrel between this country and Spain, chiefly on questions of trade. The rights acquired by us at Utrecht, to provide the Spanish colonies with slaves and to send an annual ship with English goods to sell at the great Spanish American fair at Portobello, were infractions of the Spaniards' close preserve in their own colonial trade which they objected to and were constantly attempting to stop; our merchants were also to blame in taking an unfair advantage of their privileges: with the result that there were constant differences between the two Courts, and a great deal of licensed free-booting on both sides in America. The Spaniards had other grievances also. They objected with some reason to settlements made by English

logwood cutters on the shores of central America ; and with less justification to the establishment of our latest colony in Georgia. The planting of Georgia in 1732 was due chiefly to the initiative of General Oglethorpe, the friend of Pope and Johnson. His main idea, akin to that of Hakluyt and Gilbert, was to find an outlet for the debtors pining away uselessly in the Fleet and other prisons ; his secondary object was to create a buffer colony between Carolina and Florida, its troublesome Spanish neighbour to the south. Thither, therefore, he took out his first party of debtors and refugees, laid down rigid laws for them, amongst others a prohibition of rum and slaves, and built the fort of Savannah as an outpost against Florida. From the outset the Spaniards disputed the English right to the new colony ; and border affrays between Florida and Georgia further embittered the feeling between the two nations.

War first broke out with Spain in 1739 and dragged on for several years inconclusively. The war with France which formally began a few years later was more serious, although its real nature was never fully understood by the English ministers. Carteret, in command during its early stages, could never look beyond Europe and regarded issues of commerce or colonies as so much "muck." Later Newcastle, though dimly conscious of colonial issues, had not the faculty of conceiving or executing any rational

plan of operations. Once more the New Englanders achieved almost the only success in America. The governor of Massachusetts was Shirley, a Sussex man, who had gained the confidence of the people by identifying himself with their interests and even allowing the assembly to think that his schemes were their own. One of these was for the capture of Louisburg. Four thousand New Englanders, led by Colonel Pepperell, one of themselves, with a small English squadron in support, captured the fortress after a siege of only six weeks. Even after this success, due, as it was justly said, "less to England and its king than to the inhabitants of New England," Newcastle failed in the following year to support a project of Bedford and Pitt to send a fleet against Quebec; and, to the lasting disgust of the colonials, at the peace of 1748 allowed Louisburg to be returned to France in exchange for Madras.

In America, as in India, hostilities between England and France were hardly interrupted during the period between the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and the outbreak of the Seven Years War in 1756. The prospects for this, which was to prove the decisive bout, were not too rosy for the English colonists. They had, indeed, numbers on their side, some 400,000 to a mere 55,000 and a continuous and fairly compact coast-line from the St. Lawrence to the borders of Florida, in contrast to French Louisiana and

Canada which were some thousands of miles apart and connected only by a straggling line of forts. But here the obvious advantages of the English ceased. At home there was an incompetent ministry with no conception of the colonial issues involved in the forthcoming struggle : in America the thirteen colonies, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina and Georgia, had learned nothing and were not only unable to agree on any common policy but could not even trust their own executives with the means for decisive action. As one of their governors said of them, they were but "a Rope of sand . . . loose and unconnected." Their rivals, on the other hand, were still as united as ever, proud of a definite policy carefully planned at Versailles, with forts strongly defended and shrewdly placed either for offence or defence and with a governor to whom they looked with respect. For at this crisis the governor was Montcalm, a capable and gallant soldier with a keen eye for strategy, and though hampered by a rascally intendant, able to inspire in others that confidence in victory that he felt himself. Still one factor was left which might prove decisive, the command of the sea. Instinctively the English, a sea-going race on both sides of the Atlantic, felt the need of it ; the French, essentially land-fighters, were more

likely to forget that America was not necessarily won on American soil.

The early stages of the fight for America fully justified France's adventurous policy. In 1754 Colonel Washington had to surrender at Fort Necessity after a vain attempt to expel the French from Fort Duquesne on the very soil of Virginia : in the two succeeding years Braddock's force, sent to avenge Washington's defeat, was annihilated on the Monongahela, Shirley's stout New Englanders were repulsed from Fort Niagara, and Oswego, their solitary fort on Lake Ontario, was captured. No victories elsewhere served to relieve the gloomy outlook, for in 1756 we lost Minorca, and the Black Hole of Calcutta seemed to sound the death-knell of our prestige in India. But a change was at hand. "England has long been in labour," said Frederick the Great, "but at last she has brought forth a man." That man was Pitt, wanting the parade of birth or fortune, long excluded from power by the hostility of the King and the jealousy of Newcastle, but now universally called for as the one man who could save the country. He instantly saw that the main issue of the war was "the succour and preservation of America," to be achieved, not by concentrating our energies on German campaigns, but by our exertions on the spot and our supremacy at sea. He made the appeal rarely made in vain to the spirit and patriotism of the men in these islands and

in America; and having evoked that spirit gave it the needed guidance. He showed his trust in his countrymen by sending home the foreign mercenaries brought over to defend our soil and calling out the ancient English militia to take their place. He showed his trust in the Highlanders who, barely ten years before, had invaded England, by calling them from their mountains to fight for the throne they had tried to upset. He showed his trust in the Americans by taking it for granted that they would give willingly and fight cheerfully for the common cause; and he removed one of their chief grievances by putting their levies on an equality with those from England. He formed intelligible schemes of operation and chose and inspired the right men to carry them out. Above all he saw to it that England, to save herself and win America and India, should, as Athens had done, "put herself on board her fleet" and dominate the seas.

Pitt's plans took time to mature and did not show their full effect till 1758. In that year Louisburg was finally captured by a fleet under Boscawen and an army under Amherst and Wolfe; Fort Duquesne, the source of the trouble in America, was taken and appropriately renamed Fort Pitt (now Pittsburg); Senegal and Goree the principal French stations in West Africa fell an easy prey to an English squadron. Next year Ticonderoga and Crown Point, the

French outposts on the Hudson River route to Canada, were stormed by Amherst; Quebec itself was won on the Heights of Abraham as much by Saunders' fleet as by Wolfe's army; in that same year of wonders, when, as Horace Walpole complained, "our bells are worn threadbare with ringing for victories," Guadaloupe, the richest of the French West India sugar islands, was surrendered; and, to secure all these victories, Pitt's chosen admirals, Boscawen and Hawke, gained complete supremacy at sea by the great naval victories at Lagos and Quiberon. After these victories the surrender of all Canada and of Martinique and other West India islands was inevitable; and when Spain rashly entered the war on the side of France, the same fate befell most of her East and West Indian possessions.

Before England had garnered all his victories, Pitt himself had fallen from power. But the peace of Paris in 1763, though in some respects falling below his hopes, records the highest point in the first stage of England's imperial progress. Goree and most of the conquests in the West Indies were restored, but in North America, as in India, our supremacy was unquestioned. Besides Newfoundland and Cape Breton we held the whole coastline of America from Labrador to the south of Florida, while every obstacle to our penetration into the vast interior was swept away.

By the Seven Years War Great Britain had acquired weighty advantages, but also weighty responsibilities. This war determined that the character of the civilization in North America should not be Latin but Anglo-Saxon, just as it had made it inevitable that India, at any rate for over a century, should owe the preservation of her ancient civilization to the genius for government of the same race. But these advantages and responsibilities had their dangers. For the first time in her history England began to arouse the fear and jealousy of other nations by her predominance; and her chief enemies, France and Spain, were only waiting for the opportunity to abase her. Again, materially, our victories had been won by our naval supremacy, and by our fleet alone could we maintain it: there was danger that in the flush of success this need would be overlooked. Still more had we won by the spirit of trust and free co-operation temporarily stimulated on both sides of the Atlantic by Pitt. With the loss of that spirit, all the value of our success might pass away. And to that spirit there was grave danger; for the system of government both at home and in America was alien to it and needed complete reform. The more immediate danger was in America, for there, with the French menace removed, the American colonists had no material reason for dependence on a mother country in many ways opposed to their interests. Eng-

land's only chance of averting this danger was by revising her methods of controlling the colonies.

From the earliest time the settlers, especially in New England, had treated very lightly the tie connecting them with the old country. Many of them had emigrated avowedly to break away from conditions which they disliked at home; and with their independent views on religion and politics they especially resented any interference with their methods of Church and State government. Distance, also, in those days of difficult communications, when letters from London took about six weeks to reach the ports of New England and almost as many months to reach the remoter colonies, kept the colonials out of touch with England and English preoccupations. This sense of aloofness and independence had even been encouraged by the very liberal measure of self-government granted from the outset to the new settlements.

Houses of burgesses had been allowed to "break out" in all of them; and almost the only direct control left to the Crown was through the executive authority of the governors. Even

in that sphere the assemblies' power over finance and legislation made it virtually impossible for these royal governors to carry out a policy disliked in the colony: while two colonies, Rhode Island and Connecticut, having the right of electing their own governors, were almost entirely exempt from direct royal authority.

Had the control over the American colonies depended solely on the royal prerogative reserved in the charters, it would probably have disappeared much earlier. But after the Revolution the English Parliament began to usurp many of the Crown's functions and especially to claim more extensive powers of legislation over the colonies. It took, for example, a keen interest in the settlement of Georgia; while the increase of legislation on imperial trade affected the colonies generally. The somewhat shadowy control of the Crown arising from the original charters had always been admitted in America; trade affecting the whole empire had also been acknowledged as within the province of Parliament; but the attempts of that body to exercise a wider influence or authority were resented by colonists who had no representation at Westminster and had assemblies of their own empowered by the Crown to deal with their own affairs. Indeed the American colonies of the eighteenth century were as sensitive about their financial and legislative independence as are the Dominions of to-day, and were bound, sooner or

later, to question the growing interest in their concerns displayed by Parliament.

The American colonists had other grievances, too, against the English connection. The victories at Louisburg, Quebec and Montreal, which finally destroyed the dread of French supremacy, were no doubt due to English admirals and generals commanding expeditions sent from home; yet even in the Seven Years War colonial levies, notably the Rangers specially trained for Indian warfare, had been more in evidence in the border fighting and more successful than the regulars under Braddock, Loudoun and Abercromby. Nor could the colonists forget that, whereas, in 1745 a New England force of 4,000 had captured Louisburg in seven weeks, Loudoun with 12,000 troops had not even ventured to attempt it in 1757, and even Amherst with 13,000 regulars had spent two months in its final reduction. Hence they were inclined to despise the regulars and greatly to underestimate their services. A more real cause of grievance was the neglect of their interests during the long administration of the Duke of Newcastle, who was reported to be unaware that Cape Breton was an island and to have answered a deputation urging him to fortify Annapolis: "Yes, certainly Annapolis must be fortified. But where is Annapolis?"; the most glaring instance of this neglect being, of course, the return of Louisburg to France after its brilliant capture by a colonial

force. All such grievances, real and imaginary, were being constantly reviewed owing to the bickerings between the governors and their assemblies on questions of supply, measures of defence and trade regulations.

The causes of complaint were, however, by no means all on one side. Even when their own interests were chiefly concerned the Americans were very trying, largely owing to their want of union. The colonies were all so jealous of one another that none was prepared to make adequate sacrifices in money or men for the common good lest its proportion should exceed that of its neighbours. Again, during wars waged largely in their interest, they were so unwilling to forego lucrative trade with the French that they helped to support the enemy's fleets and armies by their produce. England justly felt that in return for her great sacrifices in men and money for the colonists, especially during the Seven Years War, she was continually met by carping criticisms of the very moderate demands made on them and by their want of public spirit. In peace time, too, there were constant evasions of the Navigation Acts and other trade-restriction measures, which, though mainly drawn up to the advantage of England, were not entirely one-sided, since they gave the colonies considerable gains in the home market, while England's fleet bore the whole brunt of commerce defence. Misguided as some of the regulations were, they at least had

the not unworthy aim, as expressed by Pownall, Governor of Massachusetts, to form of all parts of the empire "one great commercial dominion."

The chief obstacle, next to the menace from France, to a more energetic assertion of independence by the colonies had hitherto been their disunion. Each community had been settled by separate immigrations, often differing vastly in their religious and political outlook, and kept almost as much apart from one another as from England by the long distances and bad communications; and though one attempt at co-operation was made by the four New England colonies during the Civil War, the experiment was shortlived and led to no further voluntary efforts. The home Government for its own purposes made some attempt to break down this separation, notably when Charles II and James II tried to bring New England and the middle colonies under the administration of Sir Edmond Andros. Another attempt was made on the eve of the Seven Years War. In 1754 the Board of Trade summoned delegates from all the colonies to Albany to concert a general policy and general measures against Indians and French on the borders of the English settlements. This Albany conference made a plan for a military and political confederation; another was proposed by the Board of Trade itself: but neither scheme came to anything owing to the resolute refusal of the colonies to part with a shred of their own indi-

vidual independence. Nevertheless, the war did, for the first time, create in the colonies a rudimentary conception of common interests. Pitt, by his tactful management and stimulating appeals to their patriotism, accomplished more unity of feeling than any formal scheme could have effected: the comparatively large levies that he persuaded each colony to raise and then threw together into common enterprises, accustomed them to joint action. Thereby the ground was prepared for more conscious co-operation as soon as it should be called for by a common grievance.

Pitt's brother-in-law, George Grenville, who was in office from 1763 to 1765, provided this common grievance. The war, waged, as the English ministry thought, largely in the interests of America, had left England with a heavy debt which might have been cheerfully paid, had that been the end of expenses in America. But, though the French had been removed, the Indians on the border still remained a danger. A serious rising of these Indians in 1763 under the half-breed, Pontiac, once more showed the incapacity of the colonies to unite for effective action; and the main burden of suppressing the rising again fell on troops sent from England. It became clear that relations with the Indians must be supervised by some central authority and that a considerable force of regular soldiers must be kept as a garrison in America. For

these purposes Grenville felt that the Americans might fairly be called upon to pay. Accordingly he displayed an unaccustomed vigour in the enforcement of customs duties under the Navigation Acts and other imperial measures for the regulation of trade, employing the navy to deal with the smugglers who rendered these Acts almost a dead letter, sending out custom-house officials with strict injunctions to enforce the law, and transferring revenue cases from the ordinary courts, in which juries could not be trusted to convict, to the more amenable Admiralty courts. In principle the colonists could not object to these measures, for they had always admitted the right of the imperial legislature to regulate trade. But Grenville was on more contentious ground when he undertook to raise taxes in America avowedly to pay for his new officials and troops. It is true that, when he first mooted the idea of direct taxation in 1764, he offered to wait a year to give the colonies the chance of taxing themselves; but in their disunited condition that was a somewhat illusory offer, apart from the fact that they had not been consulted on the measures for which they were called upon to pay. At any rate, in 1764 Grenville passed a Sugar Act, which imposed duties solely for revenue purposes, and in the following year the Stamp Act, which taxed newspapers, almanacs, and all legal documents: the estimated yield of these new taxes was only £145,000, less than half

the cost of the troops sent to America. Lastly, he called on the colonies to provide quarters for the troops, appointed two Imperial superintendents over Indian affairs, with complete jurisdiction over the colonials' trade with the tribes, and created still further apprehension by proposals for the extension of the episcopal system to the continent.

On abstract principles of justice Grenville might fairly have claimed the small proportion he asked of the expenses incurred by England for the benefit of America. The Americans themselves would hardly have disputed it, had they been approached with the punctilious observance of their rights to which Pitt had accustomed them: but they deeply resented measures presented to them by the Imperial Parliament, which trenched on their right of deciding on taxation through their own elected representatives. Their sense of independence and responsibility was further outraged by the attempt to administer their affairs by these new officials and under martial law. As one of their writers expressed it, "the colonies made a stand not against tyranny inflicted, but only against tyranny anticipated."

At any rate union, which French and Indian dangers had failed to create, was soon brought about by Grenville's measures. From Savannah to Portland one cry arose against the "hand of tyranny." The new revenue officers were met

on landing and their stamps confiscated : traders testified to their colonial patriotism by refusing to have any dealings in English goods. The difficulty of assembling a colonial congress vanished : and the delegates passed resolutions demanding their inherent rights and liberties. trial by jury, and freedom from taxation not voted by their own representatives.

These demands met with considerable response in England. The merchants, alarmed at the loss of trade, were all for compliance. But, apart from their interested motives, a large section of opinion in Parliament felt that the Americans were fighting for a cause as vital to Englishmen at home as abroad. In England also, with the accession of George III had come a claim for strong and efficient government and a movement to do away with party and entrust the conduct of affairs to an all-wise autocrat. Already the fruits of this new government efficiency had been seen in the effective measures taken to secure a majority for the unpopular Treaty of Paris, and in the high-handed action of the Secretary of State against Wilkes. Grenville's unconstitutional efficiency in meeting his difficulties in America brought home to men like Burke and Pitt that they had a common cause with their American fellow-subjects. Pitt put the case with all his wonted fire to the House of Commons, where even Grenville's supporters were shaken by the unexpected outburst of unanimity in

America. The Sugar Act was modified and the Stamp Act repealed ; but, unfortunately, as a sop to tender consciences, a Declaratory Act was passed stating that Parliament had the right to legislate for the colonies on any subject whatever, including finance.

This pious opinion was hardly noticed in America in the outburst of joy at the repeal ; but it soon proved to be no idle threat. A year later Townshend, in pure lightness of heart and to remove a financial difficulty at home, enacted a series of duties in America on tea and other imports. The whole aggregate of these taxes was estimated at a few paltry thousands of pounds : so trivial was the measure which directly led to the loss of the American colonies. Resistance was at first confined to Massachusetts. In 1770 the first blood was drawn at the so-called Boston Massacre, which resulted in only two deaths but was made the most of throughout the continent. The Boston Tea-party three years later, when a band of colonists disguised as Indians threw a shipload of tea into the harbour, led to the series of " Intolerable Acts " passed by Parliament to restrict American liberties. The port of Boston was closed, a severe Quartering Act passed and the constitution of Massachusetts suspended ; while the Quebec Act, which established Roman Catholicism and extended the borders of Canada southwards to the interior lands formerly claimed by France, touched all the colonies equally in

their religious prejudices, and once more dashed their hopes of expansion west of the Alleghanies. The immediate outcome of these Acts was the Philadelphia Congress of 1774, followed in the next year by the outbreak of war and the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

In the first two years of the war, when England was dealing with the revolting colonies alone, her victory seemed assured. By her command of the sea she could blockade the coast of America and bring over her troops unhindered ; she held the principal towns and forts on the continent ; in addition to her own well-trained regulars she had a large supply of German mercenaries at call. On the other hand the colonists, except for a small minority of enthusiasts, had at first little heart in the fight and still less enthusiasm for separation from the mother-country ; their armies were untrained mobs, uncertain in quantity, starving and in rags. But the Americans had two great assets which tided them over these two critical years ; first an incomparable leader, in Washington, who never despaired and kept the army together when no one else could have done so ; secondly the fact that England was almost as disunited as they were themselves. In Parliament Chatham " rejoiced that America had resisted," . . . for " resistance to your Acts was necessary as it was just : " Burke spoke to like effect in his great speech on American discontents : North himself, George III's trusted minis-

ter, was half afraid of the course on which he had embarked and tried to combine conciliation with force, a policy little calculated to bring either submission or speedy victory. The very commander in America, Howe, was a Whig with a sincere dislike for his job. Finally, there was mismanagement and jealousy at home, illustrated by the events leading to the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga in 1777.

This proved the turning-point in the war; for it emboldened the colonists to form their Confederation with a regular constitution, which gave promise of a settled government and converted many waverers to a belief in ultimate success. It had an even more important result. The French, long anxious for an excuse to avenge the Seven Years War, and only hanging back from distrust of the colonies' power of resistance, accepted Saratoga and the establishment of a constitution as proof of their value as allies. From this year onwards England had to fight not merely raw levies that she could easily have mastered, had she put forth all her energy, but most of the continent of Europe as well. France, Spain and even her old ally, Holland, made a coalition against her, while the northern powers, Russia, Sweden and Denmark, proved almost as dangerous with their Armed Neutrality League formed to resist the high-handed proceedings of the British fleet against neutral commerce. Whereas Pitt had boasted that he had won

America on the plains of Germany, it may almost as truly be said that England lost America by the gathering of her foes against her in Europe. Indeed the deciding factor in the war was the co-operation of France, who saved the new Confederation from bankruptcy by supplies of money, clothed and reinforced Washington's ragged army and, above all, offered the priceless boon of sea-power. At the end of the Seven Years War the British navy had been supreme, the French hardly daring to show themselves at sea. Since then the French, thanks to vigorous and enlightened administration, had more than recovered their ground and brought their navy to the highest pitch of efficiency; whereas the British navy, starved and neglected during the Patriot King's attempt at efficient government, had rarely been at so low an ebb. Consequently for several critical months of the war the French had been able to hold the command of the sea, on which our control of America almost entirely depended; and the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in 1781, which brought the war to an end, was almost entirely due to the temporary supremacy of de Grasse at sea. Two years later the independence of America was formally acknowledged in the Treaty of Versailles. With that closes the first chapter of England's colonial empire.

The main causes of the separation of the American colonies have already been indicated.

It is worth while examining the reasons given by the seceders themselves for their momentous step. They are specially interesting as being more theoretical and fundamental than those generally given for political changes by men of English race, who are usually content to remove a grievance and say no more about it. But the eighteenth century was an age of political and constitutional theories, in the first instance, no doubt, owing to the teaching of the Englishman Locke, in his deductions from the Revolution of 1688, but still more owing to the great French writers, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, who turned men's minds to abstract theories on the object of all government. Jefferson and other fathers of the constitution of the United States were much influenced by this school of thought. Hence are found in the resolutions passed by the American revolutionaries statements of abstract rights and general principles of government, such as are never found in such fundamental charters of English liberty, as Magna Carta or the Bill of Rights. But the enunciation of these principles is tentative and gradual. In the first continental congress of 1774 there is no thought of separation: the very first words of the Articles of Association adopted by the delegates in protection of their rights are, "We, his Majesty's most loyal subjects," and they still recognize the absolute right of Parliament to regulate their external commerce "for the purpose of securing the com-

mercial advantages of the whole empire to the mother-country." A year later, when hostilities had actually begun, the Declaration of Causes for taking up arms still avows that "we mean not to dissolve that union [with England] which has so long and so happily existed and which we sincerely wish to see restored." It was not till 1776 that the Declaration of Independence was issued containing the fateful assertion that "these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states." To defend this revolutionary doctrine, so contrary to all their recent assertions, the Fathers of Confederation sought for reasons in abstract laws of nature, such as "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by the Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness;" and that it is the "Right of the People . . . whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends . . . to alter and abolish it, and to institute new Government." But, far-fetched as such theory must have seemed to most English ears, it is noteworthy that these words only recall, in more abstract language, the reasons for which the early settlers went to America, words in essence the same as young Winthrop's, who was prepared to make his home in America, where he hoped "most to glorify God, and enjoy the presence of his dearest friends."

A large number of the colonists had gone out to America to escape what revolted them in England in the hope of securing Life, Liberty and Happiness by methods of their own. For nearly a century and a half the Government of England did not interfere to any practical extent with these aspirations. But when Grenville and George III decided to introduce their ideas of efficiency into the land, the old yearnings returned. But this time the colonists, instead of fleeing further into the wilderness, felt strong enough to stand their ground and resist a government they deemed oppressive. And this time there was no mistake about it. Not content with merely specifying particular grievances, which they had insisted on as long as there seemed a chance of redress, they laid down fundamental doctrines and appealed to principles which were to be, not merely the apology for their present revolutionary act, but indicative of the spirit in which their future state was to be ordered; nay more, they were destined to be the precedents on which revolutions elsewhere were to be based.

Could this separation have been avoided? Probably not, given the temper of the settlers inherited from the Pilgrim Fathers, and given the inability of men then living on either side of the Atlantic to realize that full responsibility for differing ideals and methods of life was quite compatible with a common loyalty to a state embracing and fostering such different ideals.

In a word the possibility of full responsible government among each of the members of a Britannic community without total separation had not yet been discovered and was not to be discovered for another half-century. Many still regret this inevitable separation : but is it to be regretted ? To-day such separation would not be necessary to enable the Americans to attain the vigour, the youthful enthusiasm and the originality which distinguish that nation. But with the ideas of those days the Americans would have continued in cramped and limited conditions, which might well have arrested for ever their marvellous power of physical and spiritual development.

CHAPTER V

BEGINNINGS OF THE NEW EMPIRE

THE loss of the American colonies left no bitterness in England. It was a blow to our national pride and our prestige, but was justly felt to be due more to our ancient enemies the French than to the Americans themselves. Our relations with the American negotiators at Versailles were far more friendly than with the French ministers: even George III, valiant fighter as he had been against the rebels, knew how to yield gracefully. In the speech from the throne he concluded with the words: "Religion, Language, Interest, Affections, may, and I hope will, yet prove a bond of permanent union between the two countries; to this end neither attention nor disposition on my part will be wanting;" and in his reception of the first American envoy he showed the tact and dignity of a generous loser. In this it may fairly be said that he was typical of his people. The English are slow thinkers and did not perhaps soon realize where lay the main causes of the disruption; but they brooded charitably over this internecine strife and gradually evolved a new spirit in dealing

with the colonies, which, to find full expression, only awaited a leader.

Less than a quarter of a century after the loss of our first great group of colonies we had already established the foundations of a still greater empire in four continents, America, Africa, Asia, and Australia. Indeed hardly had the Treaty of Versailles been signed before the nation was called upon to lay down the principles on which it intended to govern two of these new dominions. Those established for India have been described in a previous chapter : a few years later the younger Pitt's government had also to decide about Canada. On the decisions then taken, especially in regard to Canada, largely depended the success or failure of the new attempt at empire. Was the policy to be reactionary and more centralizing, since the experiment of limited liberty in the colonies had proved a failure : or was the true remedy to be found in greater trust and gradually extended liberty ?

On the eve of the War of Independence the American colonists had been especially embittered by North's Quebec Act of 1774, partly for its extension of the Canadian boundary southwards, partly for its recognition of the Roman Catholic religion. The latter provision was merely a recognition of the terms on which Amherst had accepted the surrender of the province and of the promises made in the Treaty

of Paris, which could not in honour have been repudiated: the former was set right by the Treaty of Versailles, which left the contested territory to the new nation. But in its design of keeping the new French subjects loyal the Quebec Act was entirely successful. Besides their religion the old seignorial tenure to which they were used and the French civil code were safeguarded. Accordingly, when the rebels invaded Canada and invited the Canadians to join them, they met with no effective response.

But after the war a new constitutional settlement became necessary; mainly owing to the immigration of refugees from the old colonies who refused to desert their allegiance to the King and proudly called themselves by a name still held in honour by their descendants, United Empire Loyalists. Many of these refugees found homes in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, many also settled in Upper Canada. The settlers in the maritime provinces did not call for any special treatment, since they found themselves among a population predominantly English, with a representative system already established. But with Canada it was different. The new English population had been accustomed all their lives to managing their own affairs in assemblies of their own, and would not have been content to forgo that privilege. On the other hand, had they shared a representative system with the French, they would have been hope-

lessly outnumbered at first and forced to live according to French political ideas; nor would the French civil code have suited men steeped in the traditions of English law. It became obvious to Pitt's government that some separation of the two populations was essential; and fortunately a territorial division could easily be made. By the Canada Act of 1791 the new colony was divided into Upper Canada (the modern Ontario), where most of the English had settled, and Lower Canada (the French province of Quebec). English law was to run in Upper Canada, the French civil code in Lower Canada. To both provinces was given representative government, for which the French were then neither specially anxious nor fitted; while for the English no advance was made on the old system of representation without full responsibility, which was really one of the causes of the late disruption. Still at that time no British statesman, hardly any colonist, would have conceived that full responsibility could be granted without entailing virtual separation: in fact it says much for the wisdom and charity of British statesmanship that, after the late calamitous war, no suggestion was ever made of restricting the existing colonial liberties, to which many attributed the insubordination of the Americans. At any rate it was probably the wisest solution of Canadian difficulties possible in the actual circumstances, and once more,

when the trial of war with the Americans was repeated, it left the Canadians of both races deaf to appeals to secede. "

So far, however, the best that could be said was that we had not gone back. But undoubtedly the first disruption of an empire, which had lasted a century and a half, inclined men's minds to question the old methods of colonial administration and made them more receptive to the liberal ideas of a Burke and a Chatham ; some were even ready for the entirely novel point of view expressed by Adam Smith in his great work on the *Wealth of Nations*. No such book was ever published at a more opportune time, at the outbreak of the great struggle with the Americans. No book so solid and with such revolutionary ideas has ever, perhaps, met with such speedy recognition. Within sixteen years it went through six editions ; and not many years after its first appearance the young Prime Minister acknowledged his debt to it, and at once attempted to put its teachings into practice. Especially in the sphere of colonial policy and administration was the influence of the *Wealth of Nations* far-reaching. With his incontrovertible facts and his clear reasoning Smith demolished the established doctrine of the mercantilists, who regarded the colonies as useful merely for the wealth they were supposed to bring to the mother-country ; he even laid sacrilegious hands on their ark of the covenant,

the Navigation Acts; he cast doubts on the advantage of slave labour, then regarded as the only means of production in our tropical and semi-tropical colonies. In a word he proclaimed that the interests of the mother-country, no less than of the colonies, were best served by almost unfettered freedom in the commercial and economic sphere.

From the commercial to the political sphere, though the deduction was never explicitly drawn by Adam Smith, the transition was implicit. His arguments are apparently addressed merely to the intelligent self-interest of his countrymen. But they really went much further than that. The self-interest to which they appealed was one which was bound to consider the interests of others with whom that self-interest was bound up, and thence it was an easy step to a consideration of those interests as a primary motive for action. For example, he is chiefly concerned with the economic folly of restricting colonial trade in the supposed advantage of the home trade; but this truth, once recognized, brought with it a fuller appreciation of the colonial standpoint as an end in itself. Similarly he argues against the institution of slavery merely as wasteful economically; but his arguments also greatly reinforced the case of those determined to abolish the accursed thing as a disgrace to humanity.

The agitation against slavery and the slave

trade had already begun to gather strength before the end of the American war. Already in 1772 the humanitarian party, in which the Quakers took the lead, had scored an initial triumph in the law-courts, by obtaining Lord Mansfield's decision in the *Sommerset* case, that the English law did not recognize slavery and that a slave became *ipso facto* free as soon as he set foot on English soil: the same result was obtained in Scotland in 1778 by the Knight judgment. Then the attack was concentrated on the African slave trade, which provided the sugar colonies with enormous numbers of fresh slaves annually. Slavery itself in these colonies was thought too difficult of attack at first, partly because it was then considered impossible to cultivate the land without slaves, partly because, with a limitation of the supply, the masters from self-interest would treat their slaves well. The slave trade itself was long considered one of the most lucrative forms of commerce practised by the English: but it was a horrible trade, horribly carried out, for the profits were so great and the negro cargoes so cheaply procured, that no precautions were taken to avoid excessive mortality during the "middle passage" to America. The movement against this trade only became practical politics in 1787, when Pitt's friend Wilberforce took charge of the parliamentary campaign for abolition. The passage of his Regulating Act,

which removed some of the worst evils of the traffic, was greatly assisted by Pitt's appeal to the House "to rescue those unfortunate Africans now about to be purchased by British traders from the jaws of destruction and the iron hand of oppression." But even Pitt's support could not yet secure the total abolition of the trade, in spite of his last memorable speech on the subject, with its felicitous peroration suggested by the rays of dawn then beginning to illumine the windows of St. Stephen's Chapel :—"Then may we hope that even Africa, though last of the quarters of the globe, shall enjoy at length in the evening of her days, those blessings which have descended so plentifully upon us in a much earlier period of the world. . . .

Nos ubi primus equis Oriens afflavit anhelis,
 Illic sera rubens accendit lumina Vesper."

Thereafter the French war diverted Pitt's mind from this and all other reforms. It was left to his great rival Fox, in the last days of his ministry and his life, to carry the resolution in 1806 which paved the way for abolition of the slave trade in 1807. Slavery itself involved questions of personal property, always a difficult subject for the lawyer-ridden House of Commons to tackle ; but it was finally abolished everywhere on British soil in 1833, just in time for Wilberforce on his death-bed to hear of the triumph of his life's endeavours.

To the influence of Adam Smith's views on economic liberty may also be traced the gradual disappearance of the belief that the value of colonies depended entirely on their subordination to the mother-country. Early in the nineteenth century, Brougham in his *Inquiry into the Colonial Policy of European Powers* began to question this belief and expressed the hope that, even when Great Britain found her colonies grown to equality with herself in arts, arms and wealth, she would still retain them, not in subordination, but in union, as "members of the same political body." Gibbon Wakefield, a writer still more remarkable for his influence on colonial development, developed this view in his *Letter from Sydney*, written in 1829. This title is deceptive, for the *Letter* was not really written from Sydney, but from Newgate Gaol, where Wakefield was devoting a period of enforced leisure, due to a runaway match with a rich ward in Chancery, to reflection on the evils of the colonial system. In his *Letter* he took the bold view that colonists were as well qualified as Englishmen at home to govern themselves: and that they should either be represented in the Imperial Parliament or have responsible government of their own under a viceroy, like the King, "incapable of wrong." If, he argued, we could only find reciprocity of interest and the mutual good will proceeding therefrom, "there would no longer be injurious

distinctions, or malignant jealousies, or vulgar hatred between British subjects wherever born : and Britain would become the centre of the most extensive, the most civilized and above all the happiest empire of the world." Indeed, he was convinced that union was compatible with equality of status, whereas, once the colonies broke off, even if we retained their markets, "the name of England," he declared, "would cease to be a power," since it is our colonies that "convert the mere sound of a name into a force greater than that of the most costly fleets and armies."

Here, nearly a century ago, we find the germ of the doctrine as to the true nature of the British Empire now accepted and expressed in the great report of the Imperial Conference of 1926. But many stages had to be passed through before this conclusion was reached ; a stage of almost wholesale extension of responsible government to the colonies, a stage of pessimism when many in England believed that the vigorous young colonies beginning to acquire their freedom should, if they so desired, be allowed to drift away, a stage of endeavour to draw closer to union by devising new and artificial bonds. But throughout this century the views of Wakefield and his disciples, Durham, Buller, Grey and Elgin have more and more influenced public opinion to the right end, the end of a free association of equals.

So far we have been describing the reorganization of possessions still left to England* after the great schism and theories of reform as yet only in the air. Soon also England set about creating a new empire to replace the loss. In its inception this new empire was not, as in the days of Elizabeth and the early Stuarts, the result of individual adventure, or desire to find more congenial conditions than could be found in England, but rather of a more conscious policy on the part of the Government itself. The first settlement in Australia is a good illustration of this new method. This continent, almost forgotten after its original discovery by Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch navigators, in the seventeenth century, was rediscovered by Captain Cook in his three voyages of exploration between 1768 and 1779. On the first of these voyages one of the passengers was Sir Joseph Banks, afterwards president of the Royal Society, who came back full of the luxuriant vegetation of Botany Bay on the western coast of the new continent and urging its colonization. His advice was unheeded until the Government, as a result of the secession of America, found itself without a dumping ground for convicts under sentence of transportation. Here was Banks's chance; and he persuaded Pitt's Government that they had much better send their convicts to Botany Bay than keep them in hulks in the Thames. To Botany Bay,

accordingly, Captain Phillip was sent in 1787, with a party of 750 convicts and 250 soldiers to guard them. But Botany Bay by no means answered to Banks's enthusiastic description; so after a week of misery Phillip moved further north to the site of Sydney, where the first British settlement in Australia was established.

It was not an easy community to manage. Many of the convicts, no doubt, were transported merely for political agitation or for very trivial offences under the barbarous old penal code: but among them were some hardened and savage criminals. Their original guards were soon replaced by a special New South Wales Corps, recruited in England from time-expired soldiers and officers, who as part-payment for their duties received grants of land round Sydney, and who generally were more interested in cultivating their lands than in guarding the convicts. Among these was a large element of turbulent blackguards, who often escaped from confinement and ranged the country preying on the settled inhabitants. Others of the better sort were taken into the service of those who had received grants of land; and these had a chance of being released from confinement as "emancipists." But nothing much was done to improve their condition till the advent of Colonel Macquarie as governor in 1809. He began to give them grants of land, and even public offices, as a means of recovering

their self-respect and becoming useful colonists. Meanwhile a small stream of free colonists, began to trickle out from England, as the resources of the continent began to be discovered. As early as 1797 Bass and Flinders started mapping out the coast, and they discovered Tasmania to be a separate island, which in 1803 was used to absorb some of the worst convicts. Parties went off to settle in territories now parts of Queensland, Victoria and South Australia and even of distant Western Australia. Bands of whalers and other adventurers made their way even further afield to the islands of New Zealand, already touched upon by Captain Cook, and settled here and there upon the coast, without, however, formally annexing the territory. Above all the introduction of sheep-breeding on a large scale established the prosperity of the new settlements in Australia and encouraged the growth of population. In 1801 John Macarthur, an officer of the N.S.W. Corps, first brought choice breeds of merino sheep into the country: twelve years later the discovery of magnificent pasturage beyond the Blue Mountains, hitherto the limit of penetration into the interior, laid open the vast tracts of grazing ground needed for the development of the industry.

But England was not alone in seeking to recoup her losses in the southern hemisphere. France also, since the loss of her American

colony, had been casting her eye on the islands of the south-seas. Only a few days after Phillip's landing in Australia a French ship appeared with the intention of proclaiming French sovereignty over the coast, but, finding herself forestalled by the English, sailed away to become a total wreck. Flinders in his explorations of the western and northern coasts of Australia, met a French squadron, which was giving French names to the capes and bays of the continent; and on his way back to Europe he was captured at Mauritius and robbed of his maps, which were published by Napoleon with French names as French discoveries. New Zealand even more nearly fell into French hands. Here colonization had proved a more difficult undertaking than in Australia; for, whereas the natives of Australia were few in number and too backward in intelligence to be able to put up an effective resistance to Europeans, the Maoris of New Zealand were a fine, warlike race, with a comparatively high civilization, who offered the most strenuous resistance to any invasion of their rights and property. Among the English beach-combers who, with the sanction of the Maoris, had established themselves precariously on the coast, a few Frenchmen had also found a lodging. One of these was a picturesque adventurer, who called himself the Baron de Thierry and later, on the strength of a tract of land he had purchased from the Maoris, king of New Zealand;

and he offered to grant concessions to land-seekers of all nations. Fortunately he obtained no support from the French authorities, for the British Government had long resisted the demands of their squatters to annex the islands. At last in 1839, when there were already 2,000 settlers established and an ambitious scheme of further immigration had been started in England, the proclamation of New Zealand as British territory was sanctioned. The proclamation was only just in time, for almost immediately afterwards a French squadron again appeared with orders to annex the islands, but, as in the case of Australia, once more found itself forestalled.

The decisive factor in bringing the Government to annex New Zealand was Gibbon Wakefield, who had elaborated a comprehensive scheme of colonization both for Australia and New Zealand. He laid down the principle that the vast tracts of land available in the colonies should be treated as a national asset instead of being given away without any security that they were put to the best use. He insisted that a proper price should be exacted from purchasers of land and that the profits arising from sales should be devoted to assisting the emigration of labourers to work on their farms. Such immigrants would become acclimatized to the new conditions while they were earning enough wages to enable them in their turn to purchase State

lands; and so the undeveloped colonies would be gradually peopled by the most useful class of settlers and the resources of the land most profitably exploited. In 1834 he had obtained parliamentary powers for a South Australian Association to colonize on these principles the huge area between New South Wales and Western Australia; the experiment was not very successful, as the immigrants found the price for undeveloped land too high and preferred to drift over into the more settled parts of the original colony; still it had the merit of inducing a considerable influx of much needed population. A New Zealand Land Society was founded later by Wakefield on similar lines and as a beginning sent 1,200 colonists to the North Island. But its most effective work was in acquiring the land on which the two chief settlements in the South Island were established. The first of these was made in 1847 round the new city of Dunedin by a party of Free Church Scotsmen, who, like the Pilgrim Fathers of old, came to find better conditions for their souls' comfort after the disruption of the Church of Scotland: two years later a second party, this time from England, came out to found an Anglican community round a centre appropriately named Canterbury.

Thus by the middle of the nineteenth century, barely more than fifty years after Phillip's party of convicts had landed in Botany Bay, organ-

ized British communities of free men had been established over much of the coast line of Australia, as well as of New Zealand. Such men were no more inclined than their forbears, who had emigrated to America, to remain content for long with a Crown Colony form of government by officials sent out to them from Whitehall; and they soon demanded control of their own affairs. In the next chapter will be told the ready response made by the home Government to this demand.

The accession of one more important colony to Great Britain remains to be told. The Dutch East India Company, early in their history, had seen the need of a suitable port of call for their ships on their long voyage round Africa to the East; and in 1652 sent out Van Riebeeck to establish a station at the Cape of Good Hope, under the shelter of Table Mountain. At first the settlement was maintained simply as a farm on which to grow vegetables and pasture cattle for the supply of fresh provisions to the Company's ships: but in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, under the notable governor Van der Stel, the confines of the settlement were enlarged and free immigrants were encouraged. Among these immigrants was a party of Huguenots driven out of France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, who introduced the culture of the vine and the art of wine and brandy-making, that soon developed

into one of the most thriving industries of South Africa. But the immigrant farmers, ever taking up new territory further afield, had constant trouble with the warlike natives of the interior and felt themselves neglected and insufficiently protected by the governing officials of the Company, whose main interest was in the original farm and stores for the East-Indiamen at Fort Good Hope. So acute was the discontent that in 1795 the farmers of the eastern provinces, Swellendam and Graaf-Reinet, set up an independent republic for themselves. In that same year the whole settlement fell into the hands of the English, who were at war with the Dutch as the allies of the French. Returned at the peace of Amiens, the Cape was again captured in 1806, this time without return, for at the Peace of Paris the Dutch agreed to give it up finally for £2,000,000.

England owed her capture of the Cape to her supremacy at sea and retained it principally as a naval station for her fleet and East India traders. But the country beyond the precincts of Cape Town from the first proved difficult to govern. The Dutch farmers, Boers as they called themselves, unlike their brethren of New Amsterdam or the French in Canada, were an intractable, independent set of men, and, as they had already shown in 1785, expecting much from their Government though resenting control over themselves. Accustomed to the hard life

of the solitary pioneer, each of them loved to pasture his herds on vast farms up-country whence he could see no neighbours and rule over his family and his slaves like a patriarch of old. Especially did he cherish his simple religion, his language and his right to deal with his natives as he chose. His habits of isolation were accentuated by his rare communication with other Europeans: for even when, after twenty years of British occupation, the first large band of English settlers came out, it was planted round Grahamstown in a district apart from most of the Boers. Lord Charles Somerset, the first Governor after the formal transfer in 1814, was not one to soften asperities. He muzzled the Press, issued arbitrary proclamations which took little account of Dutch susceptibilities, and offended them by establishing a police force composed of natives. His interference with the Boers' treatment of natives provoked a rising punished with excessive severity on five of the Dutch ring-leaders, who were hanged at Slachter's Nek, a name still potent among the Boers as a rallying cry against British rule. Somerset's successor abolished the use of Dutch in the district courts, where English was rarely understood. The last straw was the English attitude on the native question. The Boers resented the emancipation of their slaves in 1833, not so much for itself as for the inade-

quate and tardy compensation doled out to them. They resented still more the attacks, often unjust, made on them for their treatment of natives by well-meaning defenders of native rights who did not always understand the real difficulties, attacks that were sometimes countenanced by Downing Street.

Such were the grievances which drove a large number of Boer farmers to undertake the Great Trek of 1836; among others the father of a small boy named Paul Kruger. Away these farmers went across the border, packing their families and belongings in their lumbering ox-wagons, shaking off the dust of British territory and trekking off into the unknown northern wilds. After long wanderings and fights with fierce beasts and fiercer native tribes they finally came to rest, some in the country beyond the Orange River, some across the Vaal and some across the eastern mountains in the coast regions of Natal. Even here the British Government still claimed dominion over them, and Natal was definitely made a British colony; nor were the Transvaal and the Orange Free State acknowledged as independent till the middle of the century.

Thus, within three-quarters of a century of the first disruption of the Empire, in actual extent of territory we had more than made good the loss in the southern hemisphere. During the Napoleonic wars we had also picked up out-

lying posts all over the world, such as Malta in the Mediterranean, Trinidad and Tobago in the West Indies, Mauritius and the Seychelles in the Indian Ocean and forts on the west coast of Africa, chiefly valuable as ports of call for our navy and merchant marine, now more than ever the nerves of our island existence and our Empire. By 1850 Great Britain was the one great colonizing power of the world: but soon after that date other nations began to take a part in colonial enterprise, and to oust us from our virtual monopoly. Great Britain's main task thereafter was to avoid losing another empire and to bind to herself the daughter communities with links, not of military or commercial compulsion, but of unfettered liberty.

CHAPTER VI

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

AFTER the loss of America Great Britain, as we have seen, gave to her larger colonies no more liberty than she had given from the earliest times of colonization : but, and this is to her credit, she gave them no less. The time came fifty years later when an insistent demand came for more. It came, too, as before, from America.

During the war of 1812-14 both the English in Upper Canada and the French in the Lower province had stood firmly to the British connection : but for the next twenty years there was continually rising discontent among the inhabitants of both provinces with the little part allowed them by the mother-country in the management of their own affairs. In Lower Canada the Legislative Assembly was almost entirely French, but the sole executive power was the English governor assisted by a council composed entirely of English officials and, with the exception of the French-Canadian bishop, of representatives of the English minority. Hence there was a constant deadlock, the governor putting his veto on much of the legislation sent

up to him by the Assembly, while the Assembly in turn refused to vote the proper salaries for the officials or pass legislation necessary for administrative purposes. In Upper Canada the difficulties were not due to the clash of races, but quite as much to the want of responsibility in the legislature. As original settlers the United Empire Loyalists, proud of their loyalty in 1783, claimed the administration of internal affairs as their exclusive right. Their leaders formed a powerful clique, called the Family Compact, who monopolized all patronage and persuaded each successive governor that his executive council must be drawn from their ranks alone; more recent immigrants, especially those from the United States, they treated as aliens who had no right to a voice in the government. Other sections of the community had a further grievance in the system of allocating the reserve lands of the province, the disposal of which was still retained by the Crown. Lands reserved for ecclesiastical purposes were confined to the Church of England, a partiality resented by the Methodists and Church of Scotland, who claimed to have more members than the Anglicans, all the more so as the lands allocated were rarely put to any use and, becoming overgrown with forest, were a hindrance to communications. Of the remaining Crown lands the Family Compact secured the choicest portions for themselves and their friends. As Lord Durham said in his re-

port, this Family Compact, "by means of its influence in the Executive Council . . . wielded all the powers of government. . . . The Bench, the magistracy, the high offices of the Episcopal Church, and a great part of the legal profession are filled by the adherents of this party; by grant or purchase they have obtained nearly the whole of the waste lands of the province; they are all-powerful in the chartered banks, and, till lately shared among themselves, almost exclusively, all offices of trust and profit." So for different reasons in both provinces there was a determined movement for responsible government according to the wishes of the majority of the population. In the Maritime Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia also Joseph Howe was obtaining wide support for his demand that, "British institutions of government as well as British law be adapted to the conditions of Nova Scotia." •

In 1837 the agitation came to a head in both Upper and Lower Canada. In Lower Canada the leader of the malcontents was Papineau, the speaker of the Legislative Assembly. By his violent and finally rebellious speeches he so inflamed many of his countrymen that they rose in arms, though he himself fled to the United States before the first shot was fired. In this rebellion there were a few engagements between the rebels and the soldiers, but it soon died down for want of leaders and chiefly because

few of the Roman Catholic clergy, all-powerful in the province, countenanced the rising. In Upper Canada the rebels were even less effective. Their leader was William Lyon Mackenzie, an able Radical; but the only force he could raise was a disorderly mob, which was suppressed without any trouble: he also fled across the border.

There was obviously no sign of widespread sympathy with the rebels in either province, and there might have been some excuse for the ministry at home to ignore the whole agitation. Fortunately, Lord Melbourne's ministry, especially its leader in the House of Commons, Lord John Russell, took a broader view, recognizing that the agitation was a symptom of real grievances which ought to be remedied. They accordingly sent out Lord Durham as Governor-General of all the Canadian provinces, including the maritime colonies, with almost dictatorial powers of investigation and government.

Durham was one of the most advanced members of the Whig party, unfortunately less influential than he might have been owing to his autocratic temper. But he was eminently fitted for a mission of this character with full scope for his own initiative. He had long been deeply interested in colonial questions and had been an original supporter of Gibbon Wakefield's colonizing schemes. On his staff he took with him not only Wakefield but also another of that coterie, Charles Buller, a name even more memorable

than Wakefield's in Canadian history. Durham remained in Canada only five months, resigning owing to an intrigue against him engineered by his enemy Brougham. But he made full use of his five months, hearing the views of men of all shades of opinion from every province, but principally from Lower Canada, where, he soon divined, lay the most difficult problem. Here, to use his own words, "I expected to find a contest between a Government and a people: I found two nations warring in the bosom of a single state; I found a struggle not of principles, but of races;" a struggle which, owing to its French majority, might end in the province ceasing to be in any sense a British colony. He saw, therefore, that any scheme "to assure the tranquil government of Lower Canada must include in itself the means of putting an end to the agitation of national disputes in the legislature by settling at once and for ever the national character of the province. I entertain no doubts as to the national character which must be given to Lower Canada; it must be that of the British Empire;" to this end he recommended the fusion of this French province with the English province of Upper Canada. Only so, he believed, could English ideas from the younger colony be instilled into the French of Quebec, while the union of interests under one government would turn both races from separatist ideas to larger Canadian issues.

Had his plan stopped there, it would hardly have helped the Canadians to overcome their immediate difficulties. But in the famous Report, drafted in consultation with Buller, which he presented on his return to England he laid down as a condition for the success of this fusion of the two provinces the gift of responsible government. To quote his own words: "The wisdom of adopting the true principle of representative government and facilitating the management of public affairs by entrusting it to persons who have the confidence of the representative body has never been recognized in the government of the North American colonies. . . . [But] I know not how it is possible to secure . . . harmony in any other way than by administering the government on those principles which have been found perfectly efficacious in Great Britain. I would not impair a single prerogative of the Crown. . . . But the Crown must . . . submit to the necessary consequences of representative institutions; and if it has to carry on the government in unison with a representative body, it must consent to carry it on by means of those in whom that representative body has confidence." This momentous utterance was the first recognition by a British statesman of the logical result, save only separation, of any form of self-government among members of the English race. Had it been recognized earlier, the American colonies would almost certainly not have re-

volted: having once been admitted, it was a principle that the colonies would never lose sight of.

It did not, indeed, win immediate assent at home. The first step proposed by Lord Durham, the fusion of Upper and Lower Canada, with its consequence of one governor and one parliament for the enlarged province was at once agreed to. But the further step he advocated of giving full responsible government was regarded with profound misgiving. In 1835 Lord Glenelg, then Colonial Secretary, had declared that "colonial self-government and Imperial Sovereignty were irreconcilable;" and even Lord John Russell, who became Colonial Secretary in 1839, still adhered to the view he had expressed two years before, that responsibility of a governor's executive council to the legislature, like that of the British Cabinet to Parliament, was "entirely incompatible with the relations between the mother-country and the colony. . . . That part of the constitution which requires that the ministers of the Crown shall be responsible to Parliament and shall be removable if they do not obtain the confidence of Parliament is a condition which exists in an Imperial Legislature and in an Imperial Legislature only. It is a condition which cannot be carried into effect in a colony." He also pointed out that the Governor might be placed in the impossible position of attempting to reconcile orders from the Crown and advice

from an executive council dependent on a majority in the Colonial Legislature. However, he and Peel's ministry (1841-46) went so far as to concede that the governor should call to his executive council those "who, by their position and character, have obtained the general confidence and esteem of the inhabitants of the province." This compromise was a failure, as it was bound to be when men had been shown the light; and governor after governor failed to stifle by such an expedient the demand for full responsibility.

Then in 1846 another Liberal Ministry came into office with Lord Grey as Colonial Secretary. He saw clearly that it was now impossible to stop short of what Durham had advocated. The first intimation of the change of policy was unobtrusively conveyed in instructions to the Governor of Nova Scotia; but once laid down the principle became the rule in all colonies on the American continent. ". . . It cannot be too distinctly acknowledged," wrote Lord Grey, "that it is neither possible nor desirable to carry on the government of any of the British provinces in North America in opposition to the opinion of the inhabitants." For Canada he chose as his instrument to carry out this policy Lord Elgin, the son-in-law of its originator, Durham: and no better choice could have been made. Fully convinced of the wisdom of his father-in-law's robust views on responsible

government and with no further light to guide him from home than the principle involved in Grey's Nova Scotia despatch, as soon as he arrived in Canada in 1847, Elgin gave his confidence to the reform party which had a majority in the Canadian house. From that moment the change to responsible government was accomplished. To choose ministers of the Crown from such men required singular courage at this time ; for several of them had been involved in the recent rebellion and were regarded in England and by some of the staunchest supporters of the British connection in Canada as still disloyal. But, having once accepted the principle of parliamentary control, Elgin would not compromise with it, sustained as he was by his faith that the only indestructible bond between England and her colonies was not force or material profit but free affection based on trust. "I have been possessed," he wrote, "with the idea that it is possible to maintain on this soil of North America, and in the face of Republican America, British connection and British institutions, if you give the latter freely and trustingly. Faith, when it is sincere, is always catching."

Thus by Lord Durham's bold statement of the principle and by Lord Elgin's courage in putting it into practice, a complete revolution was inaugurated in the relations between the mother country and her principal colony. It is characteristic of British methods that this over-

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whelming change in the status of a Colonial Legislature should have been accomplished without any fuss, without any formal announcement of new principles, with hardly a stroke of the pen, but by the common-sense action of a couple of far-seeing statesmen, able to discern the trend of opinion both in Canada and in England. As before, the members of the executive council in Canada, as well as in the Maritime Provinces, were nominally chosen by the governor, and, as before, they were his ministers: but the custom grew up that they must be chosen from those acceptable to the parliamentary majority; and once established such a custom could never again be altered. Nor could the change be confined to Canada: it altered our attitude to all the colonies where Europeans were in a majority.

In Australia, before Queen Victoria had been on the throne ten years, several of the colonies had become populous enough to demand some voice in their own affairs. In 1842 the oldest of them, New South Wales, was given an assembly, two-thirds elective, but without responsible government; eight years later Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria were granted similar assemblies. In the same year, 1850, the Imperial Parliament established an important precedent in permitting these four legislatures to draft more liberal constitutions for themselves, subject to confirmation by itself. This licence came at an appropriate time, since the discovery of gold

in Victoria and New South Wales immediately afterwards brought a vast addition to the population in a class of immigrants accustomed to the full exercise of self-government. In Melbourne alone the population increased five-fold in the first four years of the gold-rush, while the neighbouring colonies gained in prosperity and population by the large demand for their market produce. Nor did the gold fever distract these colonies from the task of constitution-making ; and the new-comers, of a more democratic complexion than the old squatters, ensured that their radical views should be fully represented. Three of the colonies provided for an elective upper chamber, New South Wales alone preferring nomination ; all put the franchise for the popular chamber on a fairly low basis. The responsibility of the Governor's executive council to the legislature was not set forth in so many words, any more than that of the Cabinet to Parliament is in the British constitution, but it was implicit in the proposals. These constitutions, practically as drafted by the colonists themselves, were accepted and passed as Acts by the Imperial Parliament in 1855. So natural by this time had become the idea of colonial responsibility that four years later, when Queensland separated from the parent state New South Wales, and asked for a constitution, though her population numbered only 30,000, full responsible government was at once granted. Western

Australia alone lagged behind her sister colonies. The delay in giving this colony self-government was partly due to her remoteness and sparse population, but chiefly because, after all the other Australian colonies had refused to take any more convicts from England, Western Australia actually asked for them to provide the cheap labour she required. Consequently she was looked on askance by her neighbours, while her free population was too small to warrant self-government and unchecked control over a relatively large body of convicts, primarily the charge of the mother-country. When, however, the transportation of convicts had ceased, she received representative institutions in 1870, but had to wait twenty years more for the full measure of responsibility.

After 1847, indeed, the Imperial Government was not only willing but eager to grant full self-government to white communities in the empire, unless, as in Western Australia, it had some special responsibility to a section of the population or for the protection of the colony. In New Zealand and South Africa there were such considerations to cause delay. In both these colonies there were large native populations with which the interests of the colonists often clashed; and in both the Imperial Government was called upon to give protection to the colonists against the natives. As long, therefore, as the settlers in New Zealand and South Africa had

to depend chiefly on British soldiers in their wars with the Maoris or the Bantu tribes, Downing Street naturally wished to keep some control over the policy which might lead to such wars. With the natives in their turn, especially in South Africa, England entered into treaties of protection, the responsibility for which it did not feel justified in handing over to others without most abundant safeguards, since the natives had not the same confidence in the colonists, their neighbours, as they had in the tutelage of the great white Queen. Hence both in New Zealand and in South Africa the stage of full self-government came later than in Canada and Australia, where the same difficulties were less pronounced.

In New Zealand the European settlements of the two islands were so widely scattered that a curious experiment of federalism was made in the first constitution granted in 1852, which set up six provinces with large powers of local government and a general assembly for common purposes; but an executive responsible to that assembly was not sanctioned for another three years: nor did the Imperial Government divest itself of its control over native affairs till 1862. Although the wars with the Maoris did not entirely cease till 1870, the colonists justified the trust reposed in them by their enlightened policy in native affairs. As early as 1868 four Maori representatives were added to the assembly, and Maoris have had places in the upper house and

even on the executive council. This wise policy is largely due to the influence of a remarkable man, Sir George Grey, who, besides holding office as Governor in South Australia and in Cape Colony, was twice Governor of New Zealand and afterwards entered into the active politics of the colony and became Prime Minister. He had always, during the bitterest struggles, shown himself fair and sympathetic to the Maoris and by his example started the tradition now accepted in New Zealand that they should be treated as integral members of the community.

Cape Colony obtained representative institutions in 1854, while Sir George Grey was Governor there, but had to wait till 1872 for full self-government. Natal, annexed in 1844, did not reach the same stage till 1893. In both cases the delay was largely due to the preponderance—in Natal very large—of natives; and it is significant that in granting both constitutions the Imperial Government inserted clauses securing the franchise to educated natives. The continued difficulties between the two white races, Dutch and English, also account for the delay; for the emigration of the most discontented Boers from the Cape had by no means solved the difficulties. But the administration of the Colonial Office was not very successful in dealing with either native or racial problems; problems hard indeed for officials who had never been in South Africa to solve. Wars would be under-

taken to protect the border farmers from the attacks of native invaders from the interior, whose whole course had been marked by slaughter and desolation ; then the Colonial Office would come under the influence of well-meaning philanthropists, who lumped all natives together as gentle children of nature unjustly attacked by European land-grabbers, and call off the war, leaving the aggressors unpunished and the seeds of a more serious war in the future. Nor did the home Government follow out any consistent policy with the emigrant Boers. As we have seen, sovereignty over them was claimed wherever they went in South Africa till, in 1854, both the new republics were acknowledged. Then the principle was solemnly laid down that the Orange River, at that time the northern border of Cape Colony, was the furthest limit of British rule. But in 1871 rich finds of diamonds were made in territory immediately to the north of the Orange River, in part claimed by the Transvaal but chiefly by the Orange Free State. The republics were perhaps ill fitted to keep order among the turbulent bands of diggers who immediately began staking out claims in the diamond fields ; none the less, by casting to the winds its previous declaration about the limits of its sovereignty and annexing the diamond fields against the will of the republics, the British Government still further impaired its good name for consistency and fair dealing in South Africa.

The irresolution of the home authorities was never so disastrously exhibited as in the period between 1877 and 1881. In 1877 the Transvaal Boers were almost bankrupt and were engaged in an onerous war with a native tribe in the north of their territory. Sir Bartle Frere, then High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape, sent up Shepstone, a man well versed in native affairs, to investigate matters. A deputation of the Transvaal Boers met him with the request that England should annex the country and get them out of their difficulties; and he accepted the cession on behalf of the Queen with a promise that representative institutions should be granted without delay. But the transfer was far from acceptable to a large section of the Boers, whose discontent was aggravated by the establishment, instead of representative government, of military rule under an officer with little tact or power of conciliation. The native rising in the Transvaal was indeed suppressed; but in 1879 a much more serious war began on the borders with the formidable military tribe of Zulus. The disastrous defeat at Isandhlwana very much diminished British prestige in South Africa, and was hardly retrieved by the subsequent victory at Ulundi. Meanwhile the Boers, becoming more and more restive, in 1880 broke into open revolt against the English, and in the following year almost annihilated Colley's force at Majuba. A Liberal Ministry had just then come into office in Eng-

land under Gladstone, who entirely disapproved of the forward policy in South Africa; but, instead of at once announcing the reversal of the annexation, he waited till after Majuba, whereupon he handed back their country to the Boers. The effect of this surrender was deplorable, for it looked, after Majuba, to be due to defeat rather than to principle. At any rate it made the position of the English population throughout South Africa in face of the triumphant Boers extremely difficult, and in no way tended to allay racial feeling, which has always been one of the curses of South Africa.

By this time the political condition of South Africa was truly chaotic. Cape Colony was self-governing, Natal had only an elective majority on its legislative council; the Transvaal and Free State were independent republics; while Boers and Britons were more or less intermixed in all four states. To add to the confusion, not only were they all responsible for large native communities, but from 1884 the Imperial Government held an immediate protectorate over the native state of Basutoland, on the confines of the Cape and the Free State. Thereby, and from its retention of all dealings with the republics, the Imperial Government was in constant evidence in South African affairs. The best men in both white races were agreed on two great needs: first, to abolish their own differences and work out their common problems, especially in regard

to the natives, together ; second, to get rid as much as possible of the "Imperial factor" in internal politics. For the next two decades South African history is dominated by the figure of Cecil Rhodes, the man who began his political career by advocating these two principles. He also had a third ideal, for which at first he found less sympathy in South Africa, the expansion of the Anglo-Saxon race over as much of the habitable globe as possible, from a conviction that Anglo-Saxon rule was the most beneficent. "That's my dream, all English," he would say when a mere youth at Kimberley, waving his hand comprehensively northwards towards the vast interior of Africa. But he was no visionary in his methods. Wealth he deemed to be the chief instrument for action ; accordingly he set himself to acquire enormous wealth, first in the Kimberley diamond fields, where he formed the De Beers Company, then the richest and most powerful in the world ; then in 1885, when gold was discovered in the Transvaal, by acquiring a preponderating interest in some of the chief mines of the Witwatersrand. The great adventurers of the age of exploration as a rule sought wealth as an end, Rhodes sought it as a means ; but by his wide vision and his ruthless pursuit of his projects he was not unlike those early *conquistadors*.

Having secured this wealth and also almost supreme power as Prime Minister of the Cape,

he did more than any man before him to bring the two white races together and to show the Imperial Government that they could best work without interference from home. This policy is shown clearly in the first steps he took to secure expansion northwards. North of the Kimberley district the only access to the interior still available by 1884 was a narrow tract of territory inhabited by a few wandering tribes of Bechuanas and wedged in like a bottle-neck by the German colony on the west and the Transvaal on the east. Largely by Rhodes's persistence in preventing the Transvaal Boers from occupying the ground and by the feeling he aroused at the Cape he almost forced the home Government to proclaim a protectorate over this bottle-neck: then his way was clear to the whole interior up to the Zambesi. The next district to the north had recently been invaded by the Matabeles, an offshoot of the Zulu warrior-tribe; from their chief Lobengula he obtained wide mining concessions. Armed with these concessions, in 1889 he sent up, largely at his own expense, a band of pioneers, Dutch and English, who recall the gay adventurers of Elizabethan days, to peg out claims in the vast territory soon to be known as Rhodesia. A royal charter, in accordance with the practice of Tudor and Stuart times, incorporated his British South Africa Company, with power to govern the new territory thus secured for the Empire, which ultimately extended beyond the

Zambesi into the centre of Africa and was barely separated from our North African territories round the sources of the Nile.

Thus far Rhodes had succeeded in inducing English and Dutch at the Cape to set aside their animosities. But there was one man in South Africa on whom neither blandishments nor bullying had the slightest effect. Paul Kruger, the small boy who had followed his father in the great Trek of 1836, was now President of the Transvaal and was determined that his chosen people should remain uncontaminated by English ideas. He tried to keep out the trade and railways of the English colonies from his country, and, though he could not prevent English, German and Jewish gold diggers from invading his land, would give them no part in the government to which they contributed the largest share of the taxation. Rhodes, finding here the sole obstacle to his South African plans, at last decided to try the effect of force. Though still Prime Minister of the Cape he financed a revolution against Kruger's government and organized a raid under his friend Jameson into the Transvaal. Both raid and revolution were a fiasco; but their worst effect was in destroying all the results of Rhodes's conciliatory policy and reviving racial antagonism. Finally, in 1899 war broke out between the English and the two Boer states, lasting for nearly three years. In 1902 the Boers, beaten and despairing, had to

agree to the inclusion in the British Empire of both the Transvaal and the Free State.

One of the terms of peace was that self-government should be given as soon as possible to the new colonies. At first there was a not unnatural hesitation in conferring full responsibility on communities that had so recently been fighting for their independence, and a first stage of limited representative government was suggested. But in 1905 the Liberals came in and the new Prime Minister, Campbell Bannerman, fortunately was convinced that if you trust at all it is wiser to give complete trust. Accordingly in 1907 both the Transvaal and the Free State were granted constitutions as free and untrammelled by safeguards as those of the other self-governing colonies. It was an example of public trust not only generous but still more remarkable for its wisdom, as was shown by the return made to it, especially during the late war, by the two great leaders of the Boers, Botha and Smuts.

An incident that occurred during the South African war must be noticed as an indication of the enormous value attached by the self-governing colonies to the inviolability of their free constitutions. In Cape Colony the presence of many Dutch rebels and the consequent difficulty of carrying on the normal civil government had led some of the citizens, including Rhodes himself, to propose to the home Government that

the constitution should be temporarily suspended. Protests against such a proposal at once came from the other self-governing colonies, who feared that if a colonial constitution were once suspended by an external power, whatever the emergency might be, there would be no further security for any of them; and it was recalled that the American War of Independence had been partly caused by the suspension of the constitution of Massachusetts. To his great honour Chamberlain, then Colonial Secretary, refused to consider such a scheme; and it at once fell to the ground.

More remains to be said about the overseas constitutions, but that concerns the action of the colonies themselves, not of the mother-country. In concluding the account of Britain's direct dealings with the constitutional fortunes of her emigrant sons we may take some pride in the story. It is not, indeed, without instances of grievous mistakes first in America, later in South Africa; but on the whole it does show some capacity in this nation to learn from these mistakes, and gradually to build up on ever surer lines the old tradition of freedom first carried across the seas by the Pilgrim Fathers; so that to-day our great colonies enjoy, if they choose, a freedom in managing their own concerns as great as we ourselves have ever wished to possess.

CHAPTER VII

AFRICA

By the middle of the nineteenth century Great Britain outstripped most of her colonizing rivals. Spain, Portugal and Holland had fallen from their high estate when they were our rivals in the Indian Ocean or the West, and were beginning to find the few colonies left to them more a burden than a source of national pride. France still showed some of her colonizing enterprise, reminding England by her expeditions to Australia and New Zealand that her spirit of adventure was still to be reckoned with, and having, after twenty years of patient and systematic conquest and enlightened administration, become mistress of Algeria and brought order into that old nest of pirates. The other two expanding powers of the world were Russia and the United States, both gradually stretching out to the oceans that bounded their continents on east and west, but so far not interfering with the interests of other European powers. In the last half of the century, however, we began to find serious competitors. Russia was coming perilously near India's vital frontier on the north-

west ; France was expanding in two directions. In 1881 she assumed the protectorate of another North African state, Tunis ; she also revived her ambitions in the East, where she had once dreamed of founding an empire in rivalry with us. India was now closed, but there were still lands beyond. In 1862 she established her first settlements in Cochin-China, and within the next thirty years, not without several clashes with England in Burma and elsewhere, had founded her great Indo-Chinese Empire, comprising Cochin-China, Annam, Tonkin, and Cambodia, leaving only the weak state of Siam between her territory and the Indian Empire. But it was not till the last quarter of the century that other nations began to realize the value of colonies as an outlet for the energies of their surplus populations and as a means of increasing their internal and external trade.

By that time Africa was the only continent left with large tracts of comparatively empty land. There were a few trading stations on the west coast, France had founded her dominion in the north, Portugal still held some forts in her old colonies of Angola and Mozambique : otherwise England was the only power with important interests on the continent. The interior was still almost unknown except through the explorations of two Germans, Rebmann and Krapf, in the Kenya district, of Speke, Burton and Grant in the region of the Great Lakes, and above all of

Livingstone, who in the course of his great missionary journeys during the twenty years from 1853 to 1873 made known the country from the Zambesi to Lake Tanganyika and beyond. But attention was drawn at the opportune moment to the resources of the interior by the journeys across the continent, in 1879 and the succeeding years, of the explorer Stanley: for it was just then that Germany, Belgium and other countries were beginning to turn their thoughts to colonizing projects. In the scramble that ensued Germany secured a large share, with Togoland, Cameroon, and South-West Africa on the west coast, and German East Africa on the east; France greatly extended her domain in the north, so as to embrace a continuous stretch from the coast-line of Tunis and Algeria, and also, after 1911, of Morocco, on the Mediterranean, almost to the Congo in the south, and from the Atlantic nearly as far as the Nile; the Congo basin was assigned to the King of the Belgians; Portugal revived her dormant claims to the hinterland beyond her coast settlements; Italy obtained Somaliland in the uneasy neighbourhood of Abyssinia and, in 1912, after a war with Turkey, Tripoli on the Mediterranean.

In the early stages of this scramble England seemed to be left in the lurch. Although she already had considerable interests in Africa, with her settlements on the Gold Coast and Sierra Leone and her colonies in South Africa, although,

too, her missionaries, traders and mariners were almost the only Europeans known to natives in other parts, and so she had every chance of being first in the field ; yet she showed little inclination to seize her opportunity. Her responsibilities in the world were already great and she did not then feel anxious to increase them : it was a time when " the burden of empire " was a common phrase in men's mouths. Moreover, she was already fully occupied with Egypt, which was left out of the general scramble. Accordingly she allowed Germany to obtain by default territories in South-West and East Africa where her own interests were originally much greater. The new territory that she actually acquired was, in fact, almost entirely the result of semi-private chartered companies, of which there was then a revival such as had not occurred since Elizabethan times. The important part played by Rhodes's British South Africa Company in securing the country up to the Zambesi and beyond has already been narrated : at one time this Company was responsible not only for Northern and Southern Rhodesia, but also for the retention of Nyasaland, the scene of Livingstone's last journeys. The Royal Niger Company, chartered in 1886, under the remarkable leadership of Sir George Taubman Goldie, laid the foundation of the now flourishing colony of Nigeria on the west coast, which was taken over by the Imperial Government in 1900. On the other side of

Africa the Imperial British East Africa Company obtained control of the territory north of the new German colony, now known as Kenya, and also of Uganda, the inland native State on the shore of Victoria Nyanza. The Company found the task of organizing this great tract of country, once a preserve of the slave-traders, beyond their capacity, chiefly owing to the length and difficulty of communications. But before they abandoned their task they had given his first opportunity to Captain Lugard, who has since proved one of our best African administrators, in bringing order to Uganda, then rent by religious dissensions between the votaries of various Christian Churches. By 1896 the Government had taken over both territories, and shortly afterwards connected Uganda by railway with Mombasa, the port of East Africa.

This reversion to the system of pioneering by chartered companies, which once more proved so fruitful to us, had several advantages. It was for the nation a cheap method of exploring the ground, the initial expenses being paid chiefly by private individuals. It gave a cautious government the opportunity to see whether the schemes of enthusiastic promoters had any chance of success before the nation was fully committed to them, and whether they were likely to receive national support. Above all—and perhaps this is its greatest merit—it gave sanguine and public-spirited visionaries like Rhodes and Goldie, and

wise administrators like Johnston and Lugard, an opportunity of assuming risks and responsibilities, almost essential for success at the outset, that they could not so easily have assumed in the Government service. Its disadvantages are that no government can disclaim ultimate responsibility for the actions of such companies, as we had already learned in the case of the East India Company ; and also that the acquisitions made thereby give an air of hypocrisy to the hesitations of our rulers about the very ventures we were allowing a semi-public company to make. Such a charge is not really justified, since the method is a natural consequence of our inveterate habit of waiting upon the event before making up our minds ; and with the exception of Queen Elizabeth's practice of publicly repudiating the actions of her sea-dogs, but personally profiting by them, we have never, as a nation, disclaimed full responsibility. •

During the half-century that we were acquiring these new territories, hitherto solely occupied by negro races, we had also been dealing with the difficult problem of Egypt. This country, ever since Napoleon's days, had always been a special object of our attention, as one of the stepping-stones to India, particularly since the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. A long course of misgovernment and extravagance led in 1876 to the repudiation of the Egyptian debt by the Khedive and to the assumption by the chief creditors,

France and England, of control over Egypt's finances. But when, in 1882, the Egyptians rose against this unpopular measure, France left England to restore order alone. Once committed to this task England found that a prolonged military occupation was the only means of securing reforms in the government, equally necessary in the interests of the bondholders and of the oppressed population. The task proved longer and more arduous, even under Cromer's able direction, than had been expected, partly owing to the difficulties raised by other powers, especially France, partly owing to trouble in the Soudan, the great province to the south recently annexed by Egypt. Stirred by the preaching of a new prophet, who called himself the Mahdi, the savage tribes of the Soudan rose against their conquerors. Charles Gordon was sent to evacuate the province, but, on arriving, thought he could maintain himself there, and with characteristic independence refused to withdraw. Hemmed in by the Mahdi's men, after vain attempts had been made to relieve him, in January 1885 the gallant visionary was struck down in Khartoum and the province was lost. But this outpost of Egypt, with its control over the Upper Nile, the life-blood of Egypt, could not be finally abandoned, and thirteen years later, after the reorganization of the Egyptian army, Kitchener reconquered it with British and Egyptian troops. The Soudan was then put

under the joint dominion of Egypt and Great Britain, but remained practically under the latter's rule.

This curious *condominium* illustrates the anomalous position also held by England in Egypt. For though without any formal authority either from the Khedive or his suzerain the Sultan, the Agent-General, Lord Cromer, had the last word in all political matters. The position was difficult enough internally, but externally was even more so, owing to the persistent hostility of France and other nations to our control. When Kitchener, for example, arrived at Khartoum, he found in the neighbourhood a French expedition under Colonel Marchand putting forward prior claims to the country; and it was chiefly through Kitchener's diplomacy that a war was avoided. But after the Anglo-French agreement of 1904 the situation was much eased externally by France's admission of our special interests and duties in Egypt; while in 1914, after the declaration of war with Egypt's suzerain, Turkey, the internal position was regularized by the proclamation of a British protectorate over Egypt. On the other hand, ever since 1882, we had declared that our occupation and control over the country would last only as long as Egypt was unfitted to provide good government for herself. Finally, therefore, in 1922, after a popular agitation of the Egyptian nationalists against further tutelage, the British Government relinquished its

protectorate, retaining only a garrison as a defence for our vital interests in the Suez Canal, and some voice in Egypt's foreign relations. Our internal control of Egypt had thus lasted almost exactly forty years. During that period we have undoubtedly achieved wonders for the physical regeneration of Egypt. We have re-established its solvency; we have raised its peasantry from their previous condition, hardly distinguishable from serfdom; we have enormously increased its agricultural prosperity by carrying out vast irrigation works on the Nile; we have promoted education. How far we have succeeded in achieving one of our professed objects, to enable the Egyptians to carry out similar schemes for themselves, still more to govern themselves efficiently and with equal justice to all, still remains to be seen. It may perhaps prove that, strong and able as our rule has been, it has not found just that human, sympathetic touch, which the French have so much more than we in dealing with other races, and which is especially needed to make others wish to imitate some of the finest characteristics of our public life.

In the rest of Africa under the direct rule of the home Government our problems have been almost exclusively with black races on a much lower plane of civilization, and incidentally also with questions relating to the settlement of Euro-

pean or Asiatic immigrants. In addition to the territories already acquired in Africa before the end of last century, since the war we have become responsible, as mandatories of the League of Nations, for the administration of German East Africa and parts of Togoland and Cameroon ; the Union of South Africa has similar duties in German South-West Africa. These mandated territories are in no sense a part of the British Empire, though their administration is, for the time being, a duty of members of the Empire subject to supervision by the League of Nations.

The partition of Africa differs in one important respect from any previous seizure of territory by European conquerors or adventurers, in that it was regulated in 1885 by solemn sanctions and conditions agreed to by a conference at Berlin attended by representatives of nearly all the powers of the world. Among other obligations undertaken by the signatories was "to further the moral and material well-being of the native populations." Since then this obligation has been reinforced by further pledges given by the French, British and Belgian mandatories for territories in Africa, that they would regard it as a sacred trust to "work continuously for the training and education of the Africans towards a higher intellectual, moral and economic level," and for "the well-being and development of such peoples as are not yet able to stand by them-

selves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world."

When European nations began in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to divide Africa among themselves, England alone had had much experience in dealing with the African races. In South Africa the Imperial Government had always treated the welfare of the natives as a special responsibility of its own, and, even when it gave responsible government to the Cape, had not only retained control over certain native districts under our protection, but had insisted on educated natives in the Cape itself receiving the franchise. This enlightened policy found a ready response among the English and Dutch of Cape Colony, who for long were proud of their liberal native policy, originally handed on to them by the British Government, as compared with that of other South African States. More especially in schemes for the moral and material progress of the less advanced natives the Cape has taken the lead, encouraging their sense of responsibility by creating reserves where they have direct control of their own municipal affairs. Since the grant of responsible government we had also been concerned, though less directly, with the thorny problem of Indian immigration into Africa. Indians had been brought into Natal to work on the sugar plantations, and after serving their appointed terms, had in many instances chosen to remain in the country and also to penetrate

into the neighbouring States. Soon the European colonists began to resent their proximity, partly for the economic reason that the Indians, with their lower standard of living, could compete on what seemed unfair terms with white traders and workmen, partly because their different habits and manner of life introduced a further discordant element into South Africa. The Indians, who claimed the right, as British citizens, of settling in any part of empire, naturally resented the restrictions that were imposed on them by the South Africans. Now, however, after acute difficulties and negotiations that have lasted many years, a compromise has been effected, creditable to the fairness and good sense of both South Africans and Indians. Strict limitations are imposed on the immigration of Indians, but those allowed to remain in the country have had their most irksome restrictions removed; and a distinguished Indian accredited as agent by the Indian Government looks after their interests.

In the Crown Colonies on the west coast, Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and a few others, our difficulties have been least. There is no oriental question, as the Indians have shown no great desire to emigrate thither. The native question is not so acute for various reasons. The natives themselves are on a higher plane of civilization than those in the east and the south, and correspondingly easier to deal with; by the

has been done for the education of the natives, chiefly through missionary organizations, but not nearly enough; and our system does not apparently come up to the standard of the French in making it easier for them to rise "towards a higher intellectual, moral and economic level" by means of text-books and instruction specially prepared to meet their particular circumstances and present level of intelligence, and by a sympathetic understanding of their needs and limitations.

Exactly similar difficulties have also arisen in reference to oriental immigrants in Kenya as have occurred in Natal. Not only Arabs, but also Indians had been accustomed to trade at Mombasa before the British occupation; moreover, Indian labourers were imported in large numbers to build the Uganda railway from the coast. Having come there, many of them stayed, and others of their countrymen followed, to establish themselves as small traders or cultivators. But for exactly the same reasons as in South Africa the Europeans began to object to their proximity, and the same policy was adopted to prevent their having any voice in the election of members to the legislative council and to discourage further immigration of Indians.

No doubt with regard both to Indians and natives there is much to be said for the point of view of the European settlers in South and East Africa. It is useless to question their right to

be in the country at all : it is certainly at least as good as that of a large number of the native tribes, their present neighbours, who are just as much invaders, some more recent than the Europeans themselves. Being there, the Europeans feel that, if they are to have any chance of holding their own against the vastly greater number of natives, they must establish European civilization as the dominating factor in the country. For this reason they fear, as do the Australians, the gradual invasion of Asiatics with a civilization of their own, if not inferior, at any rate incompatible with that of the Europeans. As for the natives, with their overwhelming preponderance in numbers, the argument, put crudely, appears to be that even if they are to be raised to a higher level of civilization they must be taught primarily to regard the whites as their superiors, whose preponderance in the country must be secured by the help of native labour. Otherwise there is no hope of Europeans finding sufficient inducement to remain in the country at all and become so well established that they can raise the status and intelligence of these natives.

But, whatever truth there may be in these arguments, it does not excuse the practical result that for the time being, at any rate, the sense of a common citizenship with the Indians and of trusteeship for the native races is in a large measure ignored. At present the great safeguard

for the fulfilment of our Imperial and international duties in these respects is that during the existing, still experimental, stage in East Africa, the home Government, which undertook these obligations, retains paramount control. As recently as 1923 the Duke of Devonshire, then Colonial Secretary, made it plain that Downing Street would not relinquish its right of watching over native interests which, he declared, should prevail if in conflict with those of immigrants; nor would it "delegate or share this trust, the object of which may be defined as the protection and encouragement of native races." It is for this reason that the home Government has hitherto turned a deaf ear to the demand of many of the settlers in Kenya for responsible government. This refusal, which at first sight may seem antagonistic to all the principles so dearly established during the last century, that our colonists of the white race should obtain full self-government at the earliest opportunity, is really in accordance with the essential character of responsible government; for it would mean giving the adults out of a total European population of at most 10,000 full control of some 2,000,000 natives and a considerable number of Indians, with whose interests they do not at present sympathize. The conditions in our American colonies were completely different, and so were those in Australia. In South Africa responsible government was not granted until the colonists

had had more than a century of experience with native difficulties and had fully established themselves in the land ; and even then we still kept control over certain native tribes to which we were especially bound.

In East Africa, moreover, there is this important consideration, new in the history of our colonization, that we have accepted definite duties as a condition of our presence in these territories. We cannot pass on those duties until we are convinced that they will be fully carried out. At present this can hardly be so, not because the colonists in East Africa have a less delicate sense of honourable obligation than those left at home, but because their main preoccupation of establishing themselves there at all makes it difficult for them to consider any other duty. They are still in some ways comparable to our Anglo-Saxon forefathers in the early centuries of their settlement in Britain, strange to the land, bending all their energies to the elementary needs of self-protection against savage beasts and human enemies, and of clearing the soil of overgrowth and pests to win their sustenance. Little wonder that as yet they can see little beyond this hard struggle. But that does not mean that responsible government, the very life-blood of Englishmen, can or will be refused indefinitely. The stage of struggle will pass and give place, as it did with the Anglo-Saxons, to that of established security. When that comes. as it is bound

to come very soon, no government would hesitate to hand over to the colonists not only full control of their own destinies, but also fulfilment of the obligations we have incurred to others in the country. For they, after all, inherit whatever traditions of justice and fair-dealing there may be in the mother-country, and in the work of such men as Jackson and Lugard among the natives may find shining illustration of this tradition.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BRITISH EMPIRE TO-DAY : (a) THE CROWN COLONIES

THE British Empire is such an abnormal and incongruous entity that it is difficult to define or describe it except in the widest terms. It has never been the same from century to century—barely so from one decennial period to another—either in extent or constitutional character ; nor is it possible to understand its present form even dimly without some such historical account as we have attempted in the preceding pages. The term empire itself is a misnomer if it is understood in the same sense of all parts of the world that fly the British flag : Canada and Bermuda, for example, are equally parts of the empire ; but in their international or even inter-Imperial relations there is hardly a point of resemblance between them. It becomes easier, however, to understand the actual nature of what we call the British Empire if we divide its constituent members into three broad classes, first the Crown Colonies, then India as a class by itself, and lastly the Dominions : the first subordinate in most respects to the Government of

the United Kingdom, the last complete masters of their own destinies and bound to Great Britain or one another solely by the tie of willing partnership, while India stands somewhere between the two.

But even this is a somewhat crude division. The Dominions are no doubt easily distinguishable as a class apart ; but the class of Crown Colonies contains a bewildering variety of dependencies, hardly any two of which have exactly the same relations with the Imperial Parliament or exactly the same form of government, and ranging in importance from great provinces like Ceylon or Nigeria to tiny settlements like St. Helena or Tristan da Cunha. Thus in the same category there are protectorates such as that of the Malay States, and one island, Borneo, divided between a chartered company and a single British subject, Rajah Brooke, each having almost absolute sway in internal affairs, while the British Government has a preponderating voice in external affairs. There are purely military stations like Gibraltar ; there are colonies with nominated executive and legislative councils where the population have hardly any voice in their own affairs ; there are colonies with fully or partly elected legislative councils where they have a large share in the government ; and there is one colony, Malta, with a system of "dyarchy," which allows the Maltese full responsibility for their own affairs but retains for the Imperial

Government concurrent jurisdiction over naval and military affairs affecting the safety of the empire. In some respects even India seems to belong to the category of Crown Colonies; for the home Government is still fully responsible for her external and largely for her internal policy. On the other hand, she is already half-way on the road to responsible government; her special interests are so great and so unique that she has a separate Department of State in London specially concerned with them; and now she is recognized internationally as a separate member of the League of Nations.

The fact is the British Empire was not founded by one simple Napoleonic edict, nor ever reduced to one logical system of government like the Roman provinces; it simply grew as occasion arose. And in the different types and shades of government represented in it you may trace its growth as you can of a tree: a year of good rain and sun, a long shoot; a poor year, a short one; a period of depression and loss of population, and, as in the West Indies of the last century, a weakening of stamina and a loss of independence; a period of abounding enthusiasm and energy, and the rapid development of such a colony as Southern Rhodesia, already fully master of its destiny.

Most of the colonies acquired at first for colonization, notably those in North America and in Australasia, have long ago obtained self-govern-

ment. Some, such as those first established in the West Indies, have not proved suitable for European settlement and have remained Crown Colonies. Of the rest some, like our early trading posts on the west coast of Africa, were secured avowedly as commercial centres or to exploit their resources ; but a very large number have been won in wars waged principally for the defensive purposes of a nation whose security and prosperity depend almost entirely on its sea-borne commerce. When won such colonies have been retained chiefly as defensive outposts of our trade or as victualling and coaling stations for our navy, whose chief business has always been the protection of our trade routes. An interesting illustration of this tendency is the controversy that arose in 1761 whether at the peace Canada or Guadeloupe, both gained in the Seven Years' War, should be retained ; a controversy which became so embittered that Pitt remarked : " Some are for keeping Canada, some Guadeloupe : who will tell me which I shall be hanged for not keeping ? " Commercially Guadeloupe seemed to have all the advantages, with its rich sugar plantations as compared with the fish and furs that were Canada's main exports. But finally one of the decisive arguments for retaining Canada, and the most convincing to Pitt, was that thereby the French menace to our trade and security in America would be entirely removed : so Canada was chosen.

This policy of seeking security for our trade and trade-routes becomes obvious from the most cursory survey of our Crown Colony Empire. Thus in the Mediterranean we have Gibraltar and Malta, captured in the two great wars with France at the beginning and end of the eighteenth century, as permanent watch-towers over our commerce and communications in that sea; again the peaceful cession of Cyprus through Lord Beaconsfield's ingenious diplomacy was thought at the time to provide us with further security on the side of Turkey and Russia. Trade interests and security for our sea-communications, in the days of our old African trade route to India, dictated our acquisition of St. Helena and Ceylon from the Dutch in 1673 and 1796, and of Mauritius and the Seychelles in the Napoleonic wars. The Cape itself, that handy vegetable garden and watering-place for East Indiamen, was captured from the Dutch as a safeguard for India, and was for long retained solely for that purpose. For the same reason, when the main route to India was shifted, Egypt became of vital interest to us, and we further secured the new route by occupying Aden and British Somaliland at the entrance to the Red Sea, and strategic positions on the Persian Gulf. Our naval bases at Hongkong and Singapore, and our establishments in the Straits Settlements and the Malay Archipelago, have as their main object the protection and extension of our trade with China

and the Far East. Our presence in India itself was originally due to trade reasons; and we should never have been spurred on to territorial conquests there, had it not been for our fear of the French traders. Even in the Western Hemisphere, although actual colonization entered to a large extent into our design in settling on the North American Continent and in some of the West Indian islands, yet trade, or the protection of trade, accounts for a large number of our later acquisitions. The seaboard colonies of North America themselves, troublesome as they were, might have been cast adrift much sooner, had not the mother-country reckoned on them chiefly as a source of valuable imports and a good market for the export of her own manufactures. Newfoundland was long regarded simply as a fishing ground, while our conquests of West Indian islands from the French and Spaniards, and of Honduras and British Guiana, were rather to defend the trade of our original colonies in that part, than to obtain other lucrative sources of supply. The Falkland Islands, off the far southern point of South America, remote and useless materially except as sheep-breeding grounds, are typical instances of our search for naval and commercial security. A disputed claim to them in the eighteenth century almost led to a war with Spain, and, though they were not finally annexed till 1833, they have their value as commanding the trade route round

South America, a value signally illustrated during the late war, when they were the scene of our most spectacular naval victory.

Although, from a superficial point of view, this tendency in the growth of our empire gives it an almost haphazard appearance, yet there is an unconscious consistency about it, never definitely and avowedly pursued, but exhibiting itself, as occasion arises, in the actions of individual statesmen or commanders to meet an obvious and temporary emergency. In the past our naval needs have dictated and our naval supremacy has facilitated such a policy; and we now see the British Empire distributed round the world along the world's main trade routes in a way that could hardly have been improved upon had some great schemer originally plotted out the whole design. Whether or no we were justified or not in thus skilfully, albeit without any original plan, securing an empire so vast and so well adapted to our needs, the least we can now do is to govern it in such a way that those countries and races brought under our dominion should be the better for their change of masters. How far have we fulfilled this trust?

Generally speaking, thanks to our own inveterately democratic instincts, we have attempted in all our schemes of government to administer our territories with some regard to the customs and wishes of the inhabitants. This has been no easy matter or one compatible with any

rigidly uniform system, when the extraordinary variety of the subject populations is taken into account. At one end of the scale there are natives in our territories almost below the level of any civilization, black men whose sole conception of religion is in the form of the magical and often cruel and disgusting rites of the witch doctor, and who have little conception of life beyond the necessity of keeping themselves alive: at the other there are Europeans or Orientals with minds subtler than our own and with gifts of craftsmanship or thought exceeding our capacities. On the susceptibilities of these our practical efficiency in the material aspects of life are sometimes apt to jar; but we can and do give them a sense of order and communal government that we seem to possess instinctively and that few of them have. As a born Canadian in London once said: "When I meet a little Cockney in the street, perhaps dropping his h's, there is something about him that makes me feel he is a member of an Imperial race." And at any rate we have not made the mistake of being too rigid or strictly logical in our methods. We have not treated Hottentots or "blanket" negroes as if they had all the capacity for self-government that we believe we have, or dealt with educated Orientals or Europeans as if they were on the same level as ignorant savages. And, though we have much to learn from French methods of colonial

administration, yet we may take some satisfaction from the contrast drawn by a distinguished French traveller and observer between the cumbersome methods of his countrymen with their eternal " discussions byzantines " on the ideal form of government and our rough-and-ready way of giving each people the government most suited to its needs.

Especially in our efforts to elicit some expression of popular feeling from our subject peoples have we naturally been led to find varying methods according to the particular circumstances of each case. In South Africa, where the Imperial Government, even since the Union, is still directly responsible for the welfare of natives in certain well-defined tracts such as Basutoland and Bechuanaland, we leave the natives to govern themselves on their own tribal lines, but maintain a Resident on the spot to prevent undue oppression by the native rulers or the revival of cruel and barbarous practices, and to protect them from encroachment by Europeans. In the same way in West Africa, as we have seen, we rely chiefly on the native rulers to administer, under our general supervision, the concerns of their tribes. But in most of our other Crown Colonies we usually attempt to ascertain the wishes of the people by associating them in a greater or less degree with the business of legislation or even of administration. Even where the Governor's council is

purely nominated, some attempt is made to obtain a popular element by choosing one or more nominated members to represent the general community instead of confining the council to officials. More frequently the method adopted is to have an elective element in the council, and again sometimes this element is in the majority, sometimes it can be outvoted by the officials. In a few cases the legislative council is entirely elected: but in no Crown Colony, except to a limited extent in Malta, can the community, through its representatives, control the executive.

The case of the West India islands is a good illustration of our habit of adapting institutions to circumstances. Until the emancipation of the slaves in 1833 the only inhabitants of these plantations with any personality in law were the white planters, their black slaves being merely chattels. These planters, from the earliest times of our settlement in the West Indies, enjoyed a representative form of government by free election; and this system was as a matter of course extended to our later conquests in those seas. But after the abolition of slavery and the loss of prosperity, partly due to the abolition of protective duties on sugar and other colonial products, the white planters were very much reduced in numbers and the numerical proportion of the black population, now free and potential voters, was enormously increased.

By the middle of the last century it became obvious that it was no longer possible to leave the sole voice in finance and legislation to the white planters, reduced to a mere handful, while the remaining Europeans would not feel themselves secure if left to the mercy of an overwhelming black vote. Accordingly, with the consent, in most cases at least, of the white population, the constitutions were in almost every instance changed so as to leave absolute power to the Governor advised by a council either purely nominated or with a very small elective element. The only exception is Barbados, the oldest of our West Indian colonies, and the first of them in which a "house of burgesses broke out"; here also the executive and legislative councils are nominated bodies, but in addition Barbados has been granted an elected assembly with considerable powers of criticism and advice. This exception is no doubt partly due to the ineradicable pride of the inhabitants in their historic rights, partly also to the fact that Barbados has suffered less in population and prosperity than her sister islands. In the other islands the change to more absolute methods has excited no serious complaint, and is a pertinent precedent for the decision of the British Government to postpone responsible institutions for the present in Kenya.

Hitherto it has been true to say in a broad sense that the inhabitants of our Crown Colonies

have been well satisfied with their position in the British Empire. They have had security from external enemies, peace and good order internally, and impartial justice on well-ascertained principles; and most of them have enjoyed an immense increase in material prosperity since they have been taken over by the greatest trading community of the world. Singapore, for example, when it was taken over by Sir Stamford Raffles in 1819, was a mere buccaneering centre with hardly any settled population. Within a few months some 5,000 traders had established themselves there, so safe and free had Raffles made the trade: now it has a population of nearly a million and has become the great commercial entrepôt for the whole of south-eastern Asia. The prosperity of Ceylon, first from its coffee plantations, and more recently, when disease had ruined the coffee plants, from tea, cocoa and rubber, has all arisen since the British occupation a century and a quarter ago. In the West Indian islands, though their extraordinary prosperity of the eighteenth century, largely owing to the competition of cheap beet-root sugar from more temperate climates, has passed away, yet much has been done, by the paternal care of the home Government, in improving methods of communication and by bounties, to find outlets for other products, such as fruit: and there is probably no man prouder of his British

nationality 'than the negro citizen of these islands.

But although it may be true that at no time in the history of our empire have its rulers shown more intelligent and unselfish care for the material prosperity and the general well-being of the 'Crown Colonies, yet it cannot be surely stated that the last stage in the development of their relations to the central Government has been reached. The spread of education and the growth of a spirit of self-determination throughout the world, which makes itself felt, even among peoples in the lower stages of civilization, has everywhere created a feeling of unrest and a desire for something more than material prosperity and good order imposed by an extraneous power. The very excellence of our orderly rule in some respects carries with it the seed of its own decay and supersession. For it provides those who enjoy it with an opportunity for reflection on the advantages of greater self-reliance and a desire to try their own hands at working out their own salvation without the tutelage of aliens. Significant illustrations of this new spirit may be seen at almost opposite poles in the grades of civilization of our subject peoples. In Malta, an island inhabited by a quick, sensitive and most intelligent race, the insistent demand for control over their own internal affairs has obliged us within the last few years to allow them a large measure of self-

government by the system of diarchy already spoken of. At the opposite pole we find a growing tendency to satisfy the desire of even the most ignorant natives of South Africa to be masters of their own municipal concerns, and in their reserved territories to levy their own taxes, make their own roads and provide for the education of their own children ; and where the experiment has been tried it has been in the main successful.

Here is a new conception of an Imperial power's function, as that of a trustee for its subject races strictly limited until the period when their growth to a sense of responsibility enables them to claim fuller, if not complete, independence. This conception has recently received the most solemn international sanction by the provision in the peace of Versailles establishing mandated territories with special safeguards for the altruistic government of such territories until their inhabitants have become, to the satisfaction of the League of Nations, competent to stand entirely on their own feet. Various members of the British Empire between them hold the lion's share of these mandated territories, S.W. Africa, Tanganyika and parts of Togoland and Cameroon in Africa ; Palestine and Mesopotamia in Asia ; and several islands in the Pacific ;—all formerly possessions of the German or Turkish empires. The governing power has no longer absolute discretion in the manage-

ment of such mandated territories ; it has to satisfy a critical mandates commission, acting on behalf of the League, that its system is just and directed to the material and spiritual development of the peoples committed to its charge ; and it is bound constantly to hold in view the time,—far-distant, no doubt, in the case of such backward regions as parts of Africa and the Pacific islands, but much nearer in a case like Mesopotamia,—when it will have to surrender its charge to the complete control of the inhabitants of these regions.

Now although this system applies only to a limited portion of the territory for which members of the British Empire are responsible, yet it is bound to have its repercussion on other parts actually comprised within the Empire. It is bound also to have its effect on our own conceptions of our duties to all our other colonial charges. Fortunately for us and for the world, it will not be to us an entirely new conception. We have already worked out such a system for ourselves, to some extent, in relation to our greatest dependency, India ; completely, in regard to our great self-governing Dominions, the last stage in the development of which has yet to be described.

CHAPTER IX

THE BRITISH EMPIRE TO-DAY : (b) INDIA

INDIA differs fundamentally from any other country settled or conquered by Englishmen. Here is not a land suited by its climate to the permanent settlement of men and women of the northern races : nor is it inhabited so sparsely or with races of so low a type of civilization that, as in the case of the West Indian islands and some parts of Africa, a few white men, birds-of passage for the most part, can exploit the resources of the country by utilizing native labour for their own purposes. On the contrary, India's population of over 300 millions exceeds the most populated countries of Europe in density ; and some of its races possess a religion hardly less spiritual and absorbing than Christianity and a civilization older and in some respects superior to ours. In these circumstances the miracle of a handful of Englishmen ruling these millions at first sight seems inexplicable.

Numbers certainly do not account for our control over India and numbers never have accounted for it, ever since the day when Clive

laid the foundation of our Indian Empire by his victory over 50,000 Indians at Plassey with his little force of 900 Europeans and 2,300 Sepoys. Nor can numbers account for Warren Hastings's heroic and successful efforts in holding fast to India, with hardly any support from home, against a combination of such formidable enemies as the Mahrattas, Haidar Ali of Mysore and their French allies on sea and land. Even to-day, out of this total population of over 300,000,000, those of British origin amount to only 115,000, including the 62,000 regular troops, most of whom are on the north-west frontier and are never seen by the millions of the Indian plains.

Had this vast population been united, the seeming miracle would have been impossible. But India, like other Oriental countries, had long been so disunited that it was accustomed to submit to the rule of foreign invaders constituting a minority of the population. Until the eighteenth century these invaders had been wont to come over the northern barriers from the centre of Asia, arriving in great hordes which easily swept over the peaceful peoples of the Indian peninsula. The French and the English, when the invading hordes from the north had run dry, and their rivalry for the domination of India began, came not in hordes, but with this great advantage, that they had ships which gave them command of the sea-

communications and enabled them, as need arose, to pour in fresh supplies of men and material. In the fight for sea-supremacy England won ; and this victory, far more even than Clive's spectacular campaigns, secured for us the chance of winning India without danger of external interference.

The English at the outset had this further advantage, that with the break-up of the Mogul empire came the need of a strong power to evolve order out of the resulting chaos. Whatever may be true now, there was then no national consciousness in India : the country was a Tom Tiddler's ground in which any strong band of robbers or powerful despot might carve out dominion or plunder the defenceless inhabitants. The Hindus, forming two-thirds of the population, were themselves hopelessly divided by their rigid system of castes, numbering some 2,000 ; and they in turn were bitterly antagonistic to the Mohammedans who represented the conquering races from the north. Obviously an external power, such as the English, impartial between these warring creeds and interests, and determined to impose on the country its traditional peace and order, was in a strong position. When to these advantages this external power added a discipline, an administrative capacity and an art of strategy far superior to any dreamed of by the states or races of India, it becomes easier to understand the comparative

facility with which England obtained supremacy by the stages now to be outlined.

From the moment that Pitt's India Act of 1784 had established the Board of Control, the responsibility of the nation for the government of India, though still veiled by the East India Company's administrative functions and patronage, was direct and unquestioned. Even the Company's monopoly of the Indian trade was extinguished by the charter of 1813; and its sole remaining monopoly, the trade with China, was abolished in 1833. Finally, in 1858, after the Mutiny, the remaining administrative functions of the Company were taken away and government of India was formally taken over by the Crown; while in 1877 the solemn proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India made patent to the whole world this direct assumption of sovereignty.

The Honourable East India, or "John" Company, as it was affectionately called by its servants, though responsible to the Board of Control for its actions, had a great deal of power during the years of its administration, chiefly in appointing to most of the civil posts and in raising and choosing officers for the Indian army; the posts of Governor-General and a few others were in the gift of the Crown, but to the end it held the right of dismissal even of a Governor-General, a right once exercised in the case of Lord Ellenborough. In its wide exercise of

patronage, both for the "covenanted" civil service and for the army, it deserved well both of India and Britain; for any public service in the world might well be proud of such names on its roll as Munro, Metcalfe, Raffles, James Tod, "Thuggee" Sleeman, Outram, "the Bayard of India, *sans peur et sans reproche*," Napier, Durand, Malcolm, Herbert Edwardes, the Lawrences, Henry and John, John Nicholson and many others. Trained, most of them, at the Company's own colleges at Addiscombe and Haileybury, inspired by loyalty to the Company and devotion to their work for the people of India, and above all by the consciousness each had of individual responsibility, they were, as Sir George Trevelyan wrote, "proud of their occupation and convinced that success depended on their own efforts." No doubt there were at all times men among them of the type of Jos. Sedley; but as time went on they were a very small exception. No doubt, too, after the Mutiny, which had revealed some weakness and want of organization in the Company's system, it was wise to abolish this go-between of the responsible British nation and the people of India: but the Company's parting tribute to its own servants and its own system in 1858 is fully justified. "A government," it declared, "cannot be base, cannot be feeble, cannot be wanting in wisdom, that has reared two such services as the civil and military services of

the Company. . . . In those services lowly merit has never been neglected. The best men have risen to the highest places. They may have come from obscure farmhouses or dingy places of business ; they may have been roughly nurtured and rudely schooled ; they may have landed in the country without sixpence or a single letter of recommendation in their trunks ; but if they have had the right stuff in them, they have made their way to eminence, and have distanced men of the highest connections and most flattering antecedents."

Both during the Company's rule and since 1858 there have been two main objects of British policy in India : first, to protect the commercial and strategic interests of the Indian Empire against any external aggression, whether from France, Russia or any other quarter ; and second, to secure good government for the inhabitants of India. • Whether rightly or wrongly we have found both these objects inextricably connected, and in pursuance thereof we have thought it necessary gradually to extend our rule from the coastal fringes with which it began in Clive's day until, in one form or another, the whole peninsula of India has become subject to British rule or influence. We, like the Romans, have constantly found it necessary to defend ourselves against internal or external aggression on our frontiers by extending them ; likewise, in spite of the declaration in Pitt's

India Act against "schemes of conquest and extension of dominion," some of the greatest viceroys, such as Wellesley and Dalhousie, have believed that any extension of British rule in India was in the interests of the natives and so were frankly for a forward policy; whilst some, like Cornwallis, fully in sympathy with the declaration, have been forced to annex fresh territory to protect our subjects from their turbulent neighbours.

When Hastings returned to England he left in India two formidable elements of disturbance, Mysore and the Mahratta tribes, with both of which he had himself had trouble. Tippoo, the successor of Haidar Ali, the Mahomedan adventurer who had expelled the Hindu dynasty in Mysore, had extended his jurisdiction from his original territories in the south-west almost as far as the borders of the Carnatic in the east, and had become the strongest power in southern India. The Mahrattas were a Hindu tribe originally established on the Western Ghats, a low range of hills between Bombay and Goa, and first organized as a formidable power in the last quarter of the seventeenth century by their chief, Sivaji. Riding forth from their hill fastnesses they spread terror and devastation in the surrounding country by their rapid raids, and when attacked by military forces simply dispersed, only to reassemble unharmed when the danger was past. Sivaji extended his raids

northwards to Rajputana and the very heart of the Mogul empire at Delhi and Agra, and westwards to the Nizam's territory in the Deccan. Later a confederacy was formed among the Mahratta chiefs under the nominal headship of the Peshwa at Lahore, who with Holkar, Sindia and the Gaekwar of Baroda extended their rule north and east of Bombay, while the Bhonsla Rajah of Nagpur and Berar drove a wedge between the British possessions of Bengal and the Northern Circars. The Mahrattas, more than any, had hastened the decay of the Mogul power, their raids were still a constant terror to their neighbours, and, in spite of the buffer state of Oudh set up by Hastings, succeeding British rulers found that, if British rule was to survive, the menace of their power must be destroyed.

During the Napoleonic wars, as in the time of Hastings, the French found in these formidable rivals of the English just the instruments they required for their own purposes. Through Tippoo's ports, Mahé and Calicut, they had access for their ships, and they sent in military and civil agents to organize the armies, not only of Mysore and the Mahratta Confederacy, but also of the Nizam in the Deccan and other native states. Wellesley, the Governor-General from 1798 to 1805, left like Hastings very much to his own resources, was nothing loath to meet the challenge half-way, believing that to defend

successfully it was necessary to attack: and he was fortunate in having with him two of the ablest British commanders of his time, his brother Arthur and Lake.

A brief war, which ended with the storming of Seringapatam and the death of Tippoo fighting at the gate of his capital, enabled Wellesley to annex most of Mysore, including the coast-line, and to reinstate the Hindu dynasty in the small remainder of the state. The Nizam, convicted of employing French officers, was forced to disband his army and accept English officers to train the limited force he was allowed to keep up. The Nawab of the Carnatic, who had corresponded secretly with Tippoo and was also a most oppressive ruler of his subjects, was deprived of his territory, which was thrown into the presidency of Madras. Less justifiable were Wellesley's high-handed proceedings in Oudh, which was pared away so as to be entirely surrounded by British districts and thus under complete control. Finally, in 1803, he dealt with the Mahratta Confederacy, whose power was broken by Arthur Wellesley's victories at Assaye and Argaon and Lake's at Aligarh and Laswaree: fifteen years later Lord Hastings, finding them still incorrigible supporters of marauding bands, abolished the office of their titular chief, the Peshwa, and brought their princes completely under British tutelage. Before the end of the Napoleonic war, too, the islands of Mau-

ritius and Reunion, the naval bases which had always facilitated French designs on India, were captured ; and, a few years later, we secured, thanks to Sir Stamford Raffles, one of the Company's greatest administrators, Singapore as a naval bulwark to India in the east.

All the other important annexations of territory in India itself were made before the Mutiny. The least justifiable was that of Sind. In spite of treaty obligations, during a war on the north-west frontier, we sent our troops through this country, and, when its rulers objected, the Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, and Sir Charles Napier, the general in command, took up a bullying attitude, which finally goaded the inhabitants to rise against the British : after a short war they were conquered and their country annexed. Dalhousie, no less sincerely convinced than Wellesley that the greatest benefit that could be conferred on the natives of India was to bring them under the Company's just rule, was the last of the great annexing governors. Making full use of a doctrine, previously enunciated, that on failure of direct heirs a state lapsed to the paramount power, he took over several small principalities. But his most important acquisitions were the Punjab and Oudh. The conquest of the Punjab belonging to the warlike Sikhs was justified by their aggressions on our territory ; but it proved a difficult undertaking. Their late ruler, Ranjit Singh, had

made of them one of the finest combatant forces in India ; and in two wars they gave our troops some of their hardest fighting and were not finally defeated till 1849, when their country was annexed. Fortunately, they were won over by the wise rule of the Lawrences, and stood by us through the Mutiny ; and ever since have provided some of the best recruits for the Indian army.

The annexation of Oudh was far more questionable. There is no doubt that the government of the native ruler of Oudh was one of the vilest and most oppressive in India and called for British interference : but Dalhousie's peremptory method of attempting to force the abnegation of his rights on the ruler and his assumption of sovereignty, when full rights of administration would have fully answered all the purposes of good government, caused grave unrest throughout India and was one of the chief causes of the Mutiny in the following year. In Oudh alone, during that terrible period, did the insurrection assume the form of a popular rising. But while some of Dalhousie's methods of dealing with native princes may be criticized, his administrative, judicial and educational reforms, and his pioneer work in introducing modern systems of irrigation and road, railway and telegraphic communications throughout India, give him place among the greatest of Indian administrators. By the end of his term, partly by

direct annexation, partly by the system of protectorate, which gave the British a decisive voice in the government of certain native states, British supremacy had been established over the whole peninsula of India.

The Mutiny of 1857 never spread throughout India, being entirely confined to the north and centre. Besides the annexation policy, other causes of it were the slack discipline of the Bengal army, the impression made by several defeats of British troops, in the Afghan and Sikh wars, the neglect of both Hindu and Mahommedan prejudices in requiring Indian troops to go overseas, and the careless introduction of cartridges smeared with cow and pig fat. On the other hand, the Bombay and Madras armies remained loyal, the Sikhs, so recently conquered, never showed the slightest inclination to revolt, and several of the native states offered help to the Government: while our nation can never forget the staunchness shown by numberless Indians to their employers, such as the ayahs who protected the white babies they were nursing, by dyeing their faces brown, and the heroism of such men as the Sepoy who held the gate of Delhi with right and left arm successively till each was hacked off. The attempt, too, fell flat to stimulate national feeling by bringing the representative of the Mogul line of emperors out of his retirement and investing him with the old title in Delhi. Nevertheless it was a terrible time

for the Indian Government, largely denuded as it was at the time of European troops, and still more, perhaps, for the whole nation at home, waiting hourly and helplessly for news; and it was only after disasters, such as the massacre of Cawnpore, and heroic efforts by the defenders of Lucknow and the handful of men holding the Ridge at Delhi that, by the valour of men like Nicholson, Hugh Rose and countless others, the Mutiny was finally suppressed. Undoubtedly, in spite of the Company's great services to India, the main result of the Mutiny, the transfer of the direct government of India to the Crown, was all in the interest of simplified administration and more direct responsibility of the British nation for their greatest dependency.

From an early period the Government of India had also to look beyond the frontiers to defend them against external enemies. On the east the Burmese, who had been gradually extending their borders, began to threaten Bengal in 1823; in the war that ensued they lost Assam, which was added to the Bengal presidency. Once more in 1852 Dalhousie had to punish further aggressions of the Burmese; and finally in 1885 Dufferin made an end by annexing the whole of Burma and constituting it a separate province under the viceroy. But the north-west frontier, the gateway for many previous invaders of India, has caused most anxiety. The steady progress into central Asia of Russia, the European

power regarded by us as most dangerous during most of the nineteenth century, and its gradual approach to the Indian border, were certainly alarming; and since Palmerston's time the British and Indian Governments have made it a settled policy to maintain their influence in the buffer state of Afghanistan on the frontier nearest Russia. But our attempts to enforce that influence by armed intervention in that wild and mountainous country have not been successful. Both in the first Afghan war of 1839-42 and in the second of 1879-80 we had to abandon the country we had invaded after suffering serious reverses and loss of prestige. Since then, though we have had considerable trouble with the fierce frontier tribes, we have never attempted to hold Afghanistan, but have secured the same objects much better by holding all the north-west frontier passes in force, by cultivating friendly, though distant, relations with the rulers of Afghanistan, and, until recently, by the understanding of 1907 with Russia, which admitted Afghanistan to be solely within the political sphere of Great Britain.

To-day, out of a total area of 1,800,000 square miles contained within the Indian peninsula and the outlying province of Burma, territories representing no less than 1,100,000 square miles, and, out of a total population of some 319,000,000.

247,000,000, or nearly five-sixths of the whole, are under British rule. The remaining 72,000,000 of the population are distributed among some 600 native states; but even in their case the British Government, in accordance with treaty rights, exercises supervision in varying degrees over the native rulers and enforces on them a certain standard of justice and fair dealing. For all foreign relations and for the protection of the whole of India from external aggression the British Government is solely responsible. What have we done to justify this vast assumption of power?

In the first place, though, as we have seen, the stern progress of the British Raj has entailed wars and some suffering on India, yet at least it saved her from the far greater suffering that would have been her lot, had the Rohillas, the Haidar Alis, the Mahrattas and the Sikhs been allowed to scramble among themselves for the spoil of the less warlike races of her territory. If British rule has done nothing else, it has at any rate given India a century and a half of comparative peace and freedom from oppression and the opportunity of gathering herself together and discovering whether her ancient and in many respects most noble spiritual civilization contains within it the germs of that power of self-government essential to preserve it.

But if our rule had achieved nothing more than this *Pax Romana*, that alone would hardly

be enough to justify it to India, to the British people, or to the civilized world. The immense responsibility assumed by the British people to the millions in India, demands some positive help beyond the negative boon of peace and security for its justification. How far, it may be asked, has England risen to her opportunity ?

It is no use blinking the fact that there have been times when our duties to India have been subordinated to our immediate interest. The conduct of the inexperienced clerks of the Company during the years immediately succeeding Clive's conquest of Bengal, when they thought chiefly of lining their own pockets at the expense of the people committed practically, if not formally, to their care, cannot be remembered without shame. For long the "Nabobs," who made huge fortunes by questionable means in India, were no credit to that country or to ours. Incidents such as the treatment of the Begums of Oudh or, in much later days, the annexation of the same country, are not worthy of a power in the position of a trustee. In the past, too, we have sometimes been stinting in provision for the great needs of India, for the support of her chief industry, agriculture, the occupation of two-thirds of the population, and for the education of her ignorant people ; while we have been extravagant in the expenditure of Indian revenue on the army, which has served general Imperial purposes quite as much as those of India herself.

Even in what we have done well, the benefit has often been diminished by our method of conferring it. This defect has been happily hit off by a French traveller in India, who remarked of the British officials he found there that "*les Anglais sont justes, mais ils ne sont pas aimables.*" This fault has been stigmatized in even more scathing language by one of our own greatest administrators, Sir Thomas Munro, who wrote in 1818 to Lord Hastings : " Foreign conquerors have treated the natives with violence, and often with great cruelty, but none has treated them with so much scorn as we. . . . Nothing can more certainly debase the character of a people fallen under our dominion than our avowing our want of confidence in them, and on that account excluding them as much as possible from every office of importance."

But this defect of manner and this want of sympathetic confidence, calamitous as they have sometimes proved in our relations with the natives of India, are the worst charges that can be brought against our rule, at any rate since the days of Warren Hastings. Even the annexation of Oudh by Lord Dalhousie was vitiated not by the principle that dictated it—the removal of intolerable oppression—but by its method and the system of government adopted after the annexation. On the other hand it may be justly said that all those in the long line of governors and administrators of India, dating from the

time of Warren Hastings to the present day, a line which includes such names as those of Wellesley, Lord Hastings, Cavendish Bentinck, Dalhousie and Curzon, have been animated almost solely by a determination to serve, to the utmost of their abilities, the interests of India and her people. Through them and by the efforts of the whole service under them the natives of India have gained, in addition to the sense of security, many inestimable benefits under British rule. Among these are: equal justice; a fixed, and on the whole fairly light system of taxation in place of arbitrary and oppressive exactions from transitory conquerors; the development of the country's resources by canals, railways and irrigation; systematic methods for averting the desolation brought by the periodic famines which used to ruin whole provinces; and, especially in recent times, a scrupulous regard for historical traditions, literature and monuments that serve to keep alive for Indians a sense of dignity and a pride in their great past and to awaken in them lofty hopes for the future of their races.

These are doubtless great benefits; but beyond these we have a paramount duty to India; to encourage her people, under the shadow of the peace and security we have been able to offer her, gradually to develop the capacity for governing themselves and provide by their own efforts for their own unaided security. The real

test for our rule will be, how far we have fulfilled this duty. From very early days it has certainly been regarded by our finest administrators as our chief mission. Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, wrote to Munro in 1822 that "it is necessary that we should pave the way for the introduction of the natives to some share in the government of their own country"; and two years later Munro from Madras, in a minute to Elphinstone, declares that our main task is "to train Indians to govern and protect themselves." In the Act renewing the Company's charter in 1833 it is specifically laid down that "No native of India, or any natural-born subject of His Majesty, shall be disabled from holding any place, office or employment by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent or colour"; again in the Queen's proclamation of 1858, assuming the direct governance of India, the same principle is emphatically reaffirmed. Finally, in 1919, the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were made law in an Act of which the preamble states that, "It is the declared policy of Parliament to provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of Indian administration and for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire."

To attain this end the most essential need was education. Lord Hastings was, perhaps, the

first to recognize this need and to denounce those who wished "to perpetuate ignorance in order to secure paltry and dishonest advantages over the blindness of the multitude"; he even established schools at his own expense. But no practical steps to create a system of education were taken before the time of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, the reforming Governor-General who suppressed the marauding bands of Thug assassins, then one of the curses of India, and had the courage to brave religious and caste prejudice by abolishing suttee, the horrible custom whereby widows were immolated on the pyre of their dead husbands. Inspired by Macaulay, in 1835 he inaugurated the system of giving higher education to Indians on Western lines and through the medium of the English tongue. There was much to be said for this method of instruction if the object was to train Indians for European methods of government, but it necessarily limited the range of education, since comparatively few Indians were able to take advantage of it. Twenty years later a great step toward widening the range of educational facilities was taken by Dalhousie, in pursuance of Sir Charles Wood's education despatch, in instituting vernacular schools. This advance was followed up three years later by the foundation of the three universities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. These, together with the nine more universities subsequently established and

the important educational reforms introduced by Lord Curzon, have enabled Indian students to obtain a good education, combining some of the merits of Eastern and Western methods, in their own surroundings and atmosphere. But even now, nearly a century after education was officially recognized as a necessity, there is enormous leeway to make up. There are, indeed, two cardinal defects in the present educational state of India. The first is, owing perhaps to the original impulse given by Macaulay, that the education of Indians is far too much confined to the top layers of Indian society, and that a broad basis of general education is still sadly lacking. According to the last census, less than a fifteenth of the total population can even read or write, while of that fifteenth only an infinitesimal portion can be said to have a solid education. The other defect is that education hardly touches women at all, on whom, at least as much in India as elsewhere, depends instruction and the formation of character at the children's most formative age; so that, as Lord Dalhousie declared with special reference to India, "a larger proportionate impulse is given to the advancement of a people by the education of its women than by that of its men." This omission is not, indeed, the fault of the British system, but of apparently ineradicable prejudices in both the Hindu and Mahommedan communities. Nevertheless, these two defects are a serious ob-

stacle to our professed aim of leading the Indians on to self-government : for an ignorant population is an unsound basis for real popular rule.

Within the last years, however, we have given a striking example of the sincerity of our professions and of our willingness to take risks by granting the first instalment of that long-promised self-government. Not, indeed, that this is a sudden departure unheralded by previous steps in the same direction. We have seen how, more than a century ago, far-seeing officials advocated the employment of Indians as colleagues ; since their time there has always been a gradually increasing number of Indians employed as judges or administrative officials ; within recent times this tendency has advanced so far that half the candidates now appointed to posts in the Indian Civil Service are natives of India. But this in itself is not real self-government. Hardly ever has the most absolute conquering race refused to allow selected members of a conquered people to help in the administration of its territory. To give ultimate responsibility is a more serious matter. The first step in that direction was taken by Lord Ripon in 1883, when he gave some freedom of election and responsibility to Indian district boards and municipalities. Two years later the Indian National Congress began to give articulate expression to the demand for further and larger instalments of self-government, which were hardly satisfied by

the minute representation given in 1892 on the Viceroy's legislative council. The next important step was Lord Morley's Indian Councils Act of 1909, whereby Indian members were introduced not only to the provincial executive councils, but even to those of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, while members elected by the people of India were admitted to the central and provincial legislative councils. These concessions roughly correspond to what is called Crown Colony government, for though an Indian majority in the provinces might criticize financial, legislative and administrative proposals of the Government, it could not enforce its decisions on the executive. Restricted, however, as this form of responsibility was, it was necessarily so at a stage when Indians had had no previous experience in government, and when, as Lord Morley said, "it is an essential condition of the reform policy that the Imperial supremacy should in no degree be compromised."

The last stage in the constitutional development of India up to the present day is the system of *diarchy*, as it is called, introduced in 1919, and applying, of course, only to those parts of India directly under British rule. By this system a central legislature has been constituted, composed of two chambers, both with an elected majority. This legislature has the right of criticizing the executive, of passing laws and of granting supplies, but has no further control over the Viceroy's

executive council. Each of the nine principal provinces also has its legislature, consisting of only one chamber, and can not only legislate on certain "transferred subjects," such as local government, public health, education and the like, but can call to account and dismiss by its vote an executive council responsible for those transferred subjects. But, though representative institutions have been granted both to all-India and the provinces and a measure of responsible government to the provinces, at present there are checks on these powers. In cases of emergency, such as have already arisen and are decided upon by the Viceroy, he can override the decisions of the central legislature both in finance and in legislation. In the provinces certain "reserved subjects" affecting large issues of policy are the exclusive concern of the Governor and his second or nominated executive council; while even with the "transferred subjects" he can stop any measure of the legislature which seems to him detrimental to the "higher interests of India." In spite of these checks, however, in all Indian concerns there are now legislatures to criticize, legislate and grant taxes, and in certain provincial affairs the legislature has a measure of full responsibility for administration also.

It is an ingenious system calculated to train Indians in self-government without giving them power in matters affecting the supremacy of the

British Government, or the security of the country. It is avowedly only a beginning, and Parliament is under an obligation to reconsider it in 1829. It is also to be noted that at present the system affects only a small part of the population, since the voters in all the nine provinces number less than 8 millions out of a total of 247 millions in British India. But the chief complaint of Indians most advanced in their demands for self-government is that the present stage of government is merely a sham. The only subjects on which any Indians are allowed responsibility are little more than municipal matters, while for the real government of India their contention is that they have no responsibility at all. This, no doubt, is in a measure true. But these critics are apt to overlook the very great importance of the internal affairs transferred to the control of the Indian voter. His main industry, agriculture, his growing manufactures, and one of his main concerns, education, are entirely remitted to him; while for these purposes he has a huge Civil Service of Indians working under him: at the same time the British governors and officials have loyally tried to make the system a success. Moreover, there are many difficulties in further advance. One is the difficulty of securing a really popular government in a country where only a small minority can even read and write, and where, consequently, no parliamentary system can re-

present more than a mere fraction of the population. Another is that India has not yet evolved enough of that real national feeling which is essential for the co-operation needed in a popular government. Race, which divides the population into various strains of Aryan, Semitic and Mongol stock; religion, which causes those belonging to the two most prevalent creeds, Hinduism and Mahommedanism, to be constantly at one another's throats; caste, which cleaves the most numerous religious body into divisions that have no social basis in common: all these centrifugal forces in Indian life make it difficult at present to conceive of popular government on a broad basis. At first these difficulties were not made easier by the refusal of the extremists to work the instalment of self-government granted. But lately there has been more co-operation from all parties in the experiment; and therein lies the chief hope of further advance by Indians along the path of real responsibility; and it may be put down to the credit of our nation that one of us, Sir William Wedderburn, first helped and guided the development of this national feeling through the Indian National Congress. For it is only by experiment by Indians among themselves that the considerable difficulties in their way are likely to be overcome. While these remain as potent as they are to-day, it would be fatal, as many Indians are themselves aware, to take away the guiding hand of a just

and impartial power such as England has on the whole proved herself to be.

But at least it is safe to prophesy that the time will come, soon or late, when India will have gained for herself a share of self-government little inferior in status to that of the great self-governing dominions that now share the responsibility for the British Empire with Great Britain. Indians are even now taking a part in the government of their own country which would have been almost inconceivable twenty years ago; their new responsibilities are gradually increasing their capacity for greater responsibility; in spite too of some checks, there is already indication of a growing national consciousness, the essential condition of real self-government. In one way we have anticipated and so encouraged the full growth of this national consciousness by securing for India, alone of the dominions not fully self-governing, the right of speaking for herself as an independent member of the League of Nations. But, whatever form that self-government may eventually take, it is safe to say that the home Government will for long preserve a more direct influence in India and provide more immediate protection than she does in the other dominions. If for no other reason, the existence of the native states not directly under British rule, but dependent for their security and even their existence on British protection, will ensure this. Apart from this

our naval power, whereon the tranquillity of the whole of India largely depends, and our fully justified claim to hold the balance even between conflicting races and creeds in India, will probably disincline Indians to cut entirely adrift from us as the ultimate arbiters in critical questions of India's internal and external peace.

The function and position of England in India closely resemble those of the Roman Empire in our own land nearly twenty centuries ago. The Romans in Britain first and foremost protected the frontier both in their own interest and in that of the Britons themselves; they organized an orderly society, dispensed equal justice and for nearly four centuries secured internal and external peace. All this we may justly claim to have done for India and to have earned the right to apply to our rule in India Virgil's noble lines on his own countrymen's task :—

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Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento :
Hæc tibi erunt artes : pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

On the other hand, Rome, in the later years of the empire, extended in a very real sense to the Britons the full rights of citizenship common to all within that empire and equal opportunity to attain its highest posts. Here, indeed, we have fallen behind Rome, for it cannot be pretended that Indians have equal rights in all parts of the British Empire with other fellow-subjects of

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the Crown. But that they are not welcomed in some of our dominions is not the fault of the British Government either at home or in India ; it is due rather to that entire liberty granted to all British communities to decide on their own composition and destinies. Happily, however, we have never attempted to make our rule easier for ourselves by anglicizing the Indians as Rome tried to Romanize the Britons, " seducing them," as Tacitus said, " by alluring vices ; the lounge, the bath, the well-appointed dinner-table ; factors in their slavery, which the simple natives called culture." So, when the Roman armies had to leave Britain, the inhabitants, used to the softer delights of Roman civilization and lulled to security under the shelter of the Roman garrison, had lost all the virile virtues of initiative and responsibility and fell a helpless prey to new invaders. On the contrary, ever since Clive conquered Bengal, he and all his successors have realized, as Munro expressed it, that " the only way of strengthening the attachment of the natives to our government is by maintaining their ancient institutions and customs " ; and though there have been cases of " some downright Englishman . . . insisting on making Anglo-Saxons of Hindus," we have never yielded to that temptation. We have, indeed, abolished barbarous customs like suttee, we have made such mistakes as the accidental issue of greased cartridges before the Mutiny, but in principle

we have always scrupulously taken account of Indian customs and prejudices, and have never attempted to alter their national characteristics. Now, therefore, that we are giving them more freedom to govern themselves, we cannot reproach ourselves with having perverted their natural genius by grafting on them alien customs and institutions, and so adding enormously to their difficulties in working out their own salvation. If by this policy we succeed in giving India the faculty of eventually learning to protect and govern herself, Britain will have done India a greater service than she herself received from Rome.

CHAPTER X

THE BRITISH EMPIRE TO-DAY: (c) THE DOMINIONS

ABOUT the middle of last century a wave of pessimism spread over England as to the self-governing colonies. The final repeal of the Navigation Acts in 1849, together with the abolition of the special privileges given to colonial products in the home market and to British manufactures in the colonies, seemed to remove the last vestiges of material profit from them to the mother-country; while, on the other hand, the cost of Imperial garrisons and even of defensive wars still remained a burden. The colonies in their turn, extremely touchy about their newly gained responsibilities, resented any appearance of interference from home: in fact, both in Australia and in Canada some sections of the population were inclined to "cut the painter." Such a solution was not unwelcome to many in England, who talked glibly about the ripe fruit falling from the parent tree. Cobden for one, the apostle of free trade, thought it the best that could happen; Disraeli in his ardent protectionist days spoke of "these wretched

colonies " as a " millstone round our necks," and rejoiced at the prospect of their separation.

In the colonies, however, the cry for separation was hardly ever more than the expression of a passing irritation. Even in England, where for a time indifference to the colonies was the prevailing sentiment, the school which looked to men like Durham, Elgin, Buller and Wakefield for their inspiration never entirely died out. This school, stronger at first in its personalities than its numbers, retained its pride in the connection with the colonies and was far-seeing enough to realize that as voluntary partners they would contribute more to the common stock than as dependents. At any rate they kept the faith alive till its effective revival in the last quarter of the century by men like Seeley, Dilke, Rhodes, Lord Rosebery, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Chamberlain and Milner, to be followed by the young men of the Round Table group : by that time, of the so-called " Little England " group, Labouchere almost alone remained as its ineffective minor prophet.

At first many of the exponents of this revived school of Imperial doctrine believed that some special bond of interest or sentiment must be found or invented to keep the empire together. Formal federation for defence and other purposes, an Imperial representative chamber, the representation of the colonies at Westminster, Imperial preference : these were schemes propounded by

various exponents of the common policy of drawing all parts of the empire closer together. But none found very wide acceptance either at home or in the dominions, with the single exception of Chamberlain's scheme of Imperial preference, which at one time seemed to promise some success. This, however, was finally wrecked, in spite of the support of Australia and New Zealand, partly owing to the opposition of Canada to any fixed system, but chiefly because it was found impossible to fix a tariff which would not bear hardly on the necessities of the poor and the raw material of the manufacturers of Great Britain. But, though this and other schemes for creating definite bonds of union throughout the empire never came to maturity, the enthusiasm and valiant efforts of those who advocated them were anything but wasted, for the ventilation of their views turned the thoughts of those at home and those overseas to the common interests, traditions and sympathies which are stronger bonds of union than any material or artificial links.

Paradoxically enough, the closer union of the British Empire has come about, not as a result of any new system of government or commercial mechanism, but of the greater development of the individuality and independence of the dominions themselves. We have already traced the development of responsible government in the colonies now forming the dominions: but even so they were still not entirely masters in

their own houses. In Canada the maritime provinces, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, even the reunited provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, were too sparsely populated to be able to stand alone effectively ; and there was besides the vast West of Canada, with its unexplored resources, which it was nobody's business to develop. The same applied, with less force perhaps, to New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South and West Australia ; but with even greater force to Cape Colony and Natal and their Dutch neighbours, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Disunited, all these colonies, each large in extent but small in population, were almost forced to admit a certain amount of interference from Downing Street in questions of defence and of foreign relations and even of internal politics, especially when the interests of two neighbouring colonies happened to clash. Gradually they came to see that the friction engendered by conflicting interests with their neighbours of the same kin, the waste of money and energy involved in the numerous government establishments serving comparatively small populations, could be avoided by some form of confederation : above all there was the strong motive, more instinctive, perhaps, than avowed, that with increased strength and self-sufficiency they would more easily get rid of the irritating remnants of interference from home.

In America again the new impulse first found expression. Even though the two Canadas had been united, they still felt their helplessness during the American Civil War and also the need of drawing together their citizens of French and English origin in a wider continental loyalty. The maritime provinces saw the advantage of closer connection with the more central colonies. Newfoundland, more remote and with special historical traditions of her own, alone stood out from the final negotiations for confederation. By the constitution establishing the Dominion of Canada, achieved after a surprisingly short discussion by the colonies concerned and passed by the Imperial Parliament in 1867, the particular customs, laws and local pride of provinces with such strongly marked characteristics as French Quebec, U. E. Loyalist Ontario and the intensely patriotic maritime provinces, were fully safeguarded by their provincial autonomy; while the common interests of the dominion were committed to a federal executive and legislature with general control over the whole of Canada. And Sir John Macdonald and the other statesmen who framed the constitution, not content with providing merely for existing conditions, took a long view into the future and provided amply for further expansion. At that time there was little settled country westwards of Lake Ontario, except for the isolated posts of the Hudson Bay Company and, far away on the

Pacific, Vancouver Island and the shore settlements of British Columbia. But Macdonald and his colleagues had faith in the Canadian nation they were creating, faith that no boundaries short of the ocean would limit them ; so they provided that British Columbia might at any time join the dominion and that the intervening territory might be carved out into new provinces. And so it has come about that Canada, linked together by her two great ocean-to-ocean railways, now extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with her new provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and her federal territory of the Yukon in the far north.

Australia was slower in realizing the advantages of confederation. Here there were no such racial differences as in Canada. For long, too, Australia, owing to her isolation, had not the motive of external danger to induce her to combine for her own defence. On the other hand strong reasons against confederation were found in the bad communications between the various states dotted along the shores of a great continent, of which the interior was hardly explored and almost inaccessible, and in the different interests which had arisen to keep apart semi-tropical Queensland, pastoral, industrial and free-trade New South Wales, gold-mining and highly protected Victoria, South Australia with its wine and corn, backward and remote Western Aus-

tralia and the self-contained island of Tasmania. In the end the growth of external interests and the need of self-defence against intruding European powers in the Pacific, and, above all, the resolve to preserve themselves free from oriental immigration without having to depend on a somewhat irresponsible home Government, such were the main motives that finally led the Australian states to confederate in 1900. The special characteristics and jealous particularism of these states are carefully guarded in the form of federalism adopted, more akin to that of the United States than of Canada, retaining as it does for the states all powers not specifically allotted to the Commonwealth Government, a large measure of financial independence and the privilege of having governors appointed, not by the Federal Government as in Canada, but directly by the Crown. Other provisions of the constitution illustrate the growth, during the thirty-three years between the Canadian and Australian confederations, of a tendency in the dominions to claim greater autonomy from the mother-country. The Commonwealth Act still necessarily received the formal sanction of Parliament, but it enabled the people of the Commonwealth to amend their constitution as they pleased, a provision absent from the Canadian Act; and it severely restricted the right of appeal from the Commonwealth courts to the Privy Council, then regarded as one of the most

important bonds between the mother-country and her colonies.

New Zealand, as early as 1876, had superseded the semi-federal system enacted in 1852 by the present unitary form of government; and, though invited to enter the Australian Commonwealth, from considerations of distance and divergent interests had wisely declined. Thus by the beginning of the century the only large group of self-governing colonies still unfederated was in South Africa.

Union would probably have come sooner to South Africa, but for those very racial differences which made it specially necessary and eventually were its chief motive. All the ablest statesmen, both in South Africa and at Westminster, had from 1870 onwards seen that federation was the best cure for the difficulties under which the country laboured. The interests of the four states were identical in Native policy, in trade and communications and essentially in foreign policy. But, with Boer Governments in the Transvaal and the Free State and British Governments in the Cape and Natal, and with the two nationalities distributed almost at haphazard within these four states, the opposition of the Governments and the conflicting claims of English and Dutch made it difficult to think of much else than racial conflict. Rhodes, as we have seen, had long worked for reconciliation and co-operation in common South African

objects, but, as he himself said, the Raid had "upset his apple-cart"; and feeling again became so embittered that war seemed the only solution. The war at any rate settled for the time being which was to be the predominant power in South Africa, and the prompt concession of responsible government to the two conquered states disposed the Dutch to have confidence in the policy of union under the British Crown; the English also became persuaded that such a solution alone would avert further cleavage. With such dispositions on both sides the elaboration of a South African constitution was a relatively short and easy matter, especially after the acceptance, at the beginning of the conferences, of Jameson's wise proposal that Dutch should rank as an official language on an equality with English.

The Act creating the Union of South Africa, entirely drafted by South Africans themselves at their national convention of 1908-9, was passed by the Imperial Parliament in 1909 and came into operation in the following year. It follows the lines of the Canadian rather than the loose federation of the Australian constitution: indeed, General Smuts, one of the most influential delegates, avowedly took as his model our Act of Union of 1707; for while the four original States have powers of local government on certain closely defined subjects, even on these they can be overridden by the central Govern-

ment, which is really sovereign in South Africa. This again, as with the opposite system in Australia, is in accordance with the genius of the people concerned, for in South Africa both races felt the need of a co-ordinating control, while the Boers especially are inclined to a strong, not to say paternal, government, as long as they have frequent opportunities of talking at length with their governors. Naturally also the South Africans adopted the provisions in the Australian Act, limiting the right of appeal to the Privy Council and securing the right of amending the constitution without reference to Parliament.

Another strongly marked characteristic of South Africans, a happy capacity for compromise, is reflected in the constitution, not only in the provision on the language but also in others. The conflicting claims to the capital threatened, at the last moment, to wreck the agreement, until at last the happy suggestion was adopted, not of inventing some new capital in an unknown spot, as Australia did, but of making Cape Town the seat of the legislature, and Pretoria that of the executive, while Bloemfontein was consigned to the judges, an arrangement which has been found to work surprisingly well. Still more important was the difficulty about the natives. The Cape and, to a very limited extent, Natal allowed the franchise to natives who fulfilled certain educational and other requirements: the two Dutch colonies had

never allowed them a vote and were determined not to do so : consequently a compromise was reached whereby the two former colonies retained such native franchise as existed in their area, while the others still excluded it. In one important aspect of the native question, however, the South African constitution differs from the other two in reserving for the Imperial Government a voice in South African affairs. For certain native states, Basutoland, Swaziland, Bechuanaland, already under the direct protection of the Crown, were still left within the same control, although conditions under which these protectorates might eventually be transferred to the Union were adumbrated in the Act. Thus at present the Union Government is not supreme throughout South Africa to the same extent as Canada, Australia and New Zealand are in their quarters of the globe. Further, Southern Rhodesia, on the termination of the British South Africa Company's control in 1923, elected to stand out of the Union and exercise self-government independently ; and in 1924 Northern Rhodesia, on a similar transfer from the Company, was proclaimed a Crown Colony. No doubt the Union, if its people continue to show the same power of compromise in meeting the objections of minorities which in several instances they have already strikingly exhibited, will in time obtain their natural control, at least over all the territory south of the Zambesi.

Thus, within less than half a century the main groups of self-governing colonies have seized the opportunity, willingly sanctioned by the Imperial Parliament, of increasing their responsibilities and asserting their practical autonomy; and what they have gained has also been shared by the other self-governing colonies, Newfoundland, New Zealand and Southern Rhodesia. But, though these federations gave them this opportunity, there was little explicitly stated to indicate it in the actual constitutions. Englishmen have always been indifferent to the legal garments in which new liberties have appeared and have frequently allowed ancient vestments, recalling the days of tyranny, to clothe the most democratic principles. So it has been in our attitude to the dominions. Legally Parliament might to-day abolish all these constitutions: it might legislate on every petty concern of Canadians or South Africans; it might levy taxes on them for the benefit of Great Britain alone. But practically, had it even the wish, it could do none of these things. At the same time it must not be imagined that the mere granting of these federal constitutions gave the dominions immediately the rights they now in practice possess. These rights have been gradually asserted and conceded owing to the strength of national sentiment evoked by their increasing sense of responsibility and the common sense of English statesmen. For there has never been any serious

misapprehension at home of what this demand for greater autonomy implies; and we have never failed to yield to the dominions that share of our former responsibilities towards them that they have shown themselves able and anxious to assume.

The gradual growth of dominion responsibility may be best seen in the case of Canada, the first to achieve confederation, at a time when its implications were less understood than they are to-day. The later dominions have profited by Canada's gains, and have been able to incorporate them in their constitutions, which are worded in a more liberal spirit than that of Canada, though it is common knowledge that, if she so desired, Canada could obtain formally by Act of Parliament acknowledgment of the privileges that she already enjoys.

When the Dominion of Canada was inaugurated in 1867, the old ideas of Downing Street control still persisted and were to some extent put into practice. The Governor-General still had wide powers that he exercised under the direction of the Colonial office and independently of his Canadian advisers; Imperial troops were still quartered in Canada and an Imperial officer commanded the militia raised by the Canadians themselves; the right of veto on dominion legislation was wide and sometimes exercised by the ministry at home; the dominion had no international status and no voice in foreign

affairs. In Canada there was a feeling, for which there was some justification, that in many internal and all external affairs the Imperial Government was still the master; and so strong was the feeling that a certain section of the Canadian people was willing to consider separation unless these restrictions were removed.

It soon appeared that such an extreme measure was uncalled for. In internal affairs those demanding less control found themselves knocking at an open door; and by the end of the last century all the restrictions which differentiated the internal autonomy of Canada from that of England had been removed. With regard to external affairs the position was not so simple. While Canada remained within the British Empire, other nations, at least till 1918, refused to regard her as an international entity and would have formal dealings about Canadian affairs only with Whitehall. Still in practice Canada had already early in the century almost as large a voice as she required in the foreign business that concerned her. Canadian Ministers were empowered by the Crown to negotiate commercial treaties and other kindred matters, especially with the United States, and sometimes received authority, as plenipotentiaries of the King, to conclude commercial agreements. Moreover, though Canadians were highly indignant at the apparent disregard of Canadian interests in the Alaska treaty of 1903, they were not yet

prepared, as their Prime Minister Laurier explicitly stated, to assume full responsibility for foreign affairs.

Finally, however, as a logical consequence of the action of the dominions in the late war, all the remaining barriers to the acknowledgment of their international position were swept away. No doubt from the moment that Great Britain entered the war they were technically at war also ; but there their obligation ended. Of their own free-will, and without any persuasion, which indeed would have been out of the question, they whole-heartedly threw themselves into the cause of the allies ; they raised, armed, equipped and paid for their own troops, who by their discipline and valour showed themselves the equals, if not the superiors, of troops belonging to nations that enjoyed full sovereign rights. During the war, at the first suggestion made by the Prime Minister of Canada, the British Ministry willingly gave their statesmen places in the War Cabinet which dealt not only with the major strategy of the war but also with the foreign negotiations so closely allied to that strategy. After that Great Britain had no further difficulty in securing international recognition for the dominions by the admission of their plenipotentiaries to the peace conference at Versailles with rights on a par with those of other nations ; and the representatives of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South

Africa, as well as those from India, signed the treaty as principals. This international status for the dominions has been further confirmed by the Covenant of the League of Nations and in all the League's proceedings at Geneva, where a Canadian has already presided over the Assembly. Now also, since 1923, Great Britain has acknowledged the right of the dominions to appoint envoys to foreign capitals and through them to negotiate and sign treaties of their own.

With so much liberty and independence of action, how is it still possible to keep alive the feeling of solidarity within the Empire? Frequent and personal communications between the various governments are obviously essential means; and these have been secured mainly by the happy device of Imperial conferences. These originated in an almost fortuitous collection of colonial statesmen assembled in London to honour Queen Victoria's Jubilee of 1887, when the opportunity was taken by the British ministers to consult them on matters of general concern. Since then these conferences have been meeting at gradually lessening intervals, and the scope of the discussions has been widened. Proposals have sometimes been made to give these conferences a constitutional status and their decisions a binding effect, fortunately without result. The United Kingdom to some extent, the dominions more decidedly, have always

feared that such a formal power might endanger each member's control over its own internal affairs, especially in the matter of finance. Accordingly the conferences have been regarded as purely consultative and advisory, with no binding sanction for their conclusions ; and they have been all the more valuable for that reason in keeping the rulers of all parts of this scattered empire in touch with one another's views. They have served to remove misunderstandings, due more to ignorance than to malevolence, and to suggest schemes for co-operation which no constituent member of the empire is bound to accept unless its own legislature approves.

In the last conference of 1926, perhaps the most momentous held hitherto, the present relations of the self-governing parts of the Empire with one another have been defined in a formal report for the first time :—defined for the present, but not perhaps finally, for happily there is no finality in our living and growing constitution. There is nothing new in the definition, still less anything revolutionary, as it has seemed to some who have not studied the course of recent events. It merely recapitulates existing facts and thereby tends to quiet the alarms of those in the dominions who regard the legal, as opposed to the constitutional, limitations of their powers as potential restraints upon their liberty. The report opens by proclaiming the equality, already recognized in practice but

never before in theory, among "the autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate to one another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." Starting from this basic equality the report admits that there may be some differentiation of functions among the members of Empire, such as those of defence and diplomacy being mainly the business of the United Kingdom, owing to her comparative wealth, experience and responsibilities. But any survivals of worn-out customs which may seem to attach a "badge of inferiority" to the dominions, it suggests, should be removed: the Governor-General, for example, should act for the future purely as a constitutional ruler, "incapable of wrong," not also as an agent of Downing Street; the custom of the dominions in sending agents to represent their views in London should be reciprocated; and equal legislative powers, it is recommended, should be given to the dominions in matters hitherto reserved to the Imperial Parliament.

In truth, this report says, there is no constitution of the British Empire, which "defies classification and bears no real resemblance to any other political organization which now exists or has ever been tried": and yet, as it pregnantly adds, it is not an empire "founded upon

negations . . . for free institutions are its life-blood ; free co-operation its instrument." Not only is there nothing new in all this, one might go further and say that it is nothing but the finely worded expression of the policy pursued, however unconsciously, by England since her adventurers first went overseas to found new homes. Even in those early days she saw, with untroubled gaze, " houses of burgesses breaking out " and the new settlers claiming as great a share of liberty and control over their own affairs as they had in England itself. How convenient a means the empire provides for satisfying demands for the fullest measure of liberty without complete separation was only recently seen in the case of Ireland. We felt in 1921 that we were unable any longer to refuse Ireland's demand for autonomy, and yet were loath to part with her entirely : so we sought a model in our own household and gave her exactly the same rights as those enjoyed by Canada, whereby she obtained the rights of a nation, but still of a nation bound by certain ties to an empire which she had so large a share in consolidating.

Lastly we may ask two questions :—What profits it to belong to the British Empire ? and, What sanction keeps us together ? The two questions may best be answered together. There is no formal sanction to keep us together, when all the parts are so free ; free, indeed, to leave the association to-morrow, if they so desire.

There can be no compelling force short of civil war, which we tried once and are never likely to try again. Since then we have tried the other policy of trust and confidence, in the faith which, as Elgin said, "when it is sincere, is always catching." For when we first gave our brethren overseas complete self-government we tacitly admitted that if they failed to respond to our trust and broke away, we had left ourselves with no remedy. The real sanction for the permanence of this commonwealth of nations is the profit that ensues therefrom: not, indeed, material profit, for that is the least part of it. The very diversity of the empire, a diversity due to the free scope each part has to develop its own individuality—this in itself is stimulating to all the citizens of our association. We can, indeed, learn much from the varied experience and systems of foreign peoples, but not in the same intimate way that we can from our own communities. For there we are at home and so can understand more quickly. We in these islands, with our comparatively fixed institutions and social system, and our tendency to excessive caution in making changes, have learned much and can learn more from those "laboratories of the Empire," Australia and New Zealand, where, with gallant optimism, the peoples have experimented with schemes for a more equal distribution of land and other forms of wealth and with more democratic forms of

government and society, taking risks, but admitting mistakes and never afraid to start afresh. We can catch something of the spirit of courage and energy with which Canadians have gaily mastered the difficulties of their climate and vast territories, giving equal opportunities to all, and admire their happy faculty of combining personal initiative and exuberant vitality, caught perhaps from their and our American cousins, with the sense of law and orderly government inherited from us. South Africans, Dutch and English, may well give us hints in wise and sane methods of political compromise and even examples of how best to deal with native tribes and oriental immigrants, who present some of our own gravest problems. To all these in turn we can give something,—if nothing else, the sense of a stable home, where they will be welcomed with the kindly spirit we believe to belong to our race; a “home” to which even French Canadians and Dutch South Africans sometimes turn with affection, and to which those of British stock—the Canadian farmer in the far west, the Australian squatter on his up-country sheep-run, the South African pioneer in his perilous wanderings—turn to the more longingly the more years they have been absent. Throughout—and this is the binding sanction, this the profit of empire—there is the sense of a common inheritance in achievement, in a literature second to none and in that freedom of spirit and those free institu-

tions to which we have all contributed our part : and above all there is the sense of a great partnership in work still to be done in the spirit of humility of Browning's lines :—

“ Here and here did England help me,—how can I help
England ? ” say,
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise
and pray.

This wider loyalty to the Empire does not mean that any one of us sacrifices his first loyalty to the nation to which he belongs, whether it is Canada, Australia, South Africa, Britain or India itself, now also on the road to dominion status : but he can find room for two loyalties, one to his own nation, one to the whole British Commonwealth, including each of its parts. Such broad-based loyalty, transcending a man's immediate nation, is what the world needs more than aught else to-day. For our loyalty to the British Empire, so far from conflicting, as some appear to think, with an even more comprehensive loyalty to a world-wide League of Nations, actually fosters this wider sympathy. We are learning through this our commonwealth that, however violent our differences may be, they can and must be solved without recourse to the futility of war ; we are learning instinctively to see the best side rather than the worst of our sister dominions, and to think it inconceivable that our respective interests should ever become irreconcilable. This training in the British

Empire in some degree prepares and helps us for the similar but more difficult task of applying the same spirit to our dealings with other nations. Nor can any action that the dominions or Britain may take in the League possibly affect our permanent relations with one another. We all start absolutely independent in our internal affairs and are becoming practically independent, though united, in external affairs: we all have an equal status on the League and can perfectly well undertake different international duties, suited to our resources and positions, without impairing the solidarity of our brotherhood. Not only that, but we already have as an example one of our brotherhood, Canada, which for a century has been acting in her relations with her great neighbour on the assumption underlying the League of Nations covenant, that war is definitely ruled out as a solution of differences. If by this our experience we can in any way promote among the nations generally a similar double loyalty to their own first and then to a world society, that will not be the least service the British Empire will have rendered to humanity.

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